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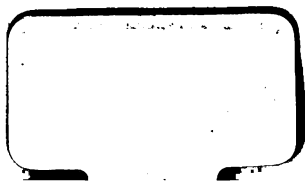
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Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow

*Gabriel MacLeod*

A NOBGENARIAN'S REMINISCENCES  
OF  
GARELOCHSIDE & HELENSBURGH  
AND  
The People who Dwelt Thereon and Therein.

AS SET FORTH BY  
DONALD MACLEOD,  
AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF THE CASTLE AND TOWN OF DUMBARTON,"  
"GUIDE TO THE LAKE DISTRICT OF SCOTLAND," &c.



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TO  
WILLIAM KIDSTON, Esq.  
OF FERNIEGAIR,  
A TRUE FRIEND OF HELENSBURGH AND ITS PEOPLE,  
THIS WORK ON GARELOCHSIDE AND HELENSBURGH  
IS, BY PERMISSION,  
*MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.*





## Proem.

---

**B**E it known unto all men by these presents that I, Donald MacLeod, lay no claim to the venerable distinction of being yet a nonogenarian, but it runs in the family, and I may yet achieve it.

The party referred to in the title as being such is my uncle, Gabriel MacLeod, whose advent and that of Helensburgh on this globe took place within a score of years of each other, the burgh having precedence.

The venerable old man would, in my presence, and for my special delectation, oft discourse of matters relating to the Garelochside and Helensburgh, covering from the beginning of this century down to date. These callow things as they came from his mouth I captured, took under my wing, and duly feathered in as fair a garb as the wardrobe of my brain could furnish, and now let them loose, along with a goodly array of bantlings of the same genus of my own, and a flock of those of an esteemed Helensburgh friend of high

literary and antiquarian tastes and acquirements, in the good hope that the conjoint brood, under one designation, will receive a kindly welcome at the hands of the inhabitants of Helensburgh, and Garelochside more especially.

It may be as well to state that a number of the following sketches have already appeared in print in the columns of the *Dumbarton Herald*, and also in those of the *Helensburgh and Gareloch Times*; two or three of them have also appeared in my "History of the Castle and Town of Dumbarton," now nearly out of print. The interesting history of the Colquhouns of Colquhoun and Luss, Lords of the Manor of Helensburgh, is by the kind permission of its author, W. Kinnaird Rose, Esq., Advocate, Edinburgh, reprinted from the published proceedings of the Scottish Arboricultural Society of 1882. My heartfelt thanks are due to Norman MacBeth, Esq., R.S.A., for permission to copy for this work his most admirable portraits of the late Sir James Colquhoun, Bart., and his son, the present Baronet, which grace the walls of the Council Chamber of the burgh. To one and all of the many kind friends who have aided me in this undertaking, I say God bless you.



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## Section II.

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*THE GARELOCHSIDE OF THE PAST AND PRESENT, AND  
INTERESTING NOTICES OF INDIVIDUALS AND INCI-  
DENTS CONNECTED THEREWITH.*

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### CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH I THE NONOGENARIAN GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF MYSELF  
AND OF THE GARELOCHSIDE OF MY EARLY YEARS.

**A**YE me, gentle reader, what a bustling time I have lived in, surely there never has been such a period of unrest and rapid changes since the advent of man upon this wondrous globe, which is our rich inheritance. What would those fellows have thought who, in the world's early dawn, had just ceased to sport caudal appendages, and to use betimes their arms as legs as wild in woods those our remote ancestors ran, if they had seen in prophetic vision how it was to fare with us—their descendants—it would almost have been sufficient to make them once again a tail unfold yborn of wonder.

As I, an heir of all the ages historic and prehistoric,



cast a retrospective glance over the path I have trodden, and mark the vast progress which has been achieved in the domain of the arts and sciences, and how beneficially they have operated in ameliorating the condition of the great body of the people, I thank God and take courage.

When I was "mewling and puking" in my nurse's arms a pipe or fire was lit by the aid of flint, steel, and tinder, and the process was slow; now Lucifer, proud son of the morning, will execute your behests a hundred times for a brown bawbee. Take that as a type of other hosts of beneficial changes, such as making the lightning carry your thoughts to the ends of the earth for a few shillings, and steam to carry yourself to the Antipodes for a few pounds!

But a truce to such contemplations. I will now, before proceeding with my narrative, proceed to give some little account of myself.

I was born in the last decade of the eighteenth century, in the Granite City, where the Argyllshire Fencibles were then encamped, in which regiment my father was an officer of the highest non-commissioned grade. I was early taken from thence to Rosneath, with its solemn yew tree avenue and gigantic silver firs, and my mother becoming widowed shortly thereafter, in that most lovely spot I and my brothers dwelt, being brought up under the sheltering arms of the great MacCailean-More, whose descendants may God long preserve in health and in wealth in the land; they are of a good stock. After a spell of learning at the clachan school, my earliest occupation was firing off a rusty old gun to frighten the crows from the fields, and on the Sundays I was especially ardent at said work, as it then had the fine flavour of forbidden fruit. I was then a

privileged individual, and wished the world to know the fact; I never was a believer in hiding my light under a bushel. When the ducal party went to shoot on the Rosneath Moors I and my twin-brother John got a change of occupation, then we were, as a rule, asked to be in attendance to make ourselves generally useful in beating the bushes, &c., for which we were suitably rewarded, not only with current coin of the realm, but with what was of fully more importance to us, loving words and considerate attentions.

From being thus early brought into close contact with the aristocracy, I ever after entertained a warm regard for them, and grieved when any of their number brought disgrace upon their order. I have been more or less intimately brought into connection, since these early days, with men of various grades, but warmer-hearted, finer fellows it was never my good fortune to meet than those belonging to the family of Argyll and their sporting companions.

During the time of my residence in the clachan of Rosneath we dwelt near the church in a cottage of the Duke's, the site of which is now embraced in the pleasure-ground of the manse, and at that period I was eye-witness to the destruction by fire, in Duke John's time, of by far the greater portion of the old Castle which stood nearer the waterside than the present one does. A somewhat detached portion was saved from the ravages of the devouring flames, and was successively occupied by Mr Robert Campbell, the Duke's factor, and by Mr Smith of Jordanhill. During their residence within the venerable walls they kept a good deal of company, and on these high occasions an elder brother of mine, who was a member of

the Argyllshire Fencibles and a famous player on the flute, was invited to show forth his skill on that instrument, which he did to the profit of himself and the delight of his auditors.

Ardencaple Castle (where the present Duke of Argyll was born) and estate, on the opposite side of the loch, belonging as they then did to the Argyll family, there were frequent comings and goings between the one side and the other. The mode of signalling by day from Cairndhu for the Duke's six-oared boat's head emblazoned barge was, for parties of mean condition one smoke ; for friends, relatives, people of quality, or visitors to the family two smokes ; and to announce that the Duke or Duchess or both their Graces waited three smokes. By night the signalling was by flashes of flame. The bargemen's efforts were graduated by the number of smokes or flashes as a matter of course.

On the point of Cairndhu, down to the end of last century, there stood a hostelry called Cairndhu Inn, and a number of Cottages. In the inn my father, who dwelt on the Ardencaple estate in one of the Muir houses, and my mother, who lived a little nearer the loch in the Westerton farm-house, were married by the Rev. Mr Allan, minister of Row, who frequently at the same place to others performed the same operation. Neddy, the Duke's fisherman, resided in one of the cottages on the point, and he was married to a bright little Englishwoman, who saluted him invariably when he landed from his fishing expeditions with the kindly words "Welcome home, Neddy, fish or no fish." The point for many years was called Neddy's point, and by some of the older folks it is still so termed. After the old inn was demolished the new or Ardencaple Inn (now Mrs Drew's private mansion) was built, and it formed one of

the stages where horses were changed on the coaching run from Glasgow to Inveraray. Visitors to the Argyll family at either of their residences also there put up their private carriages and horses. It was a bustling thriving place in the old coaching days.

As shewing the encroachments that the sea has made on the banks of the Gareloch within my remembrance, it may be stated that there stood in my boyish days, on the point below the inn of Rosneath a lime-kiln in the centre of a goodly sized extent of grassy ground, not a vestige of either of which is left, the tumultuous tides of the narrows now rush furiously over the spot twice a day. At low water it is a channelly beach, and that sort of thing has been going on extensively on both sides of the Loch.

Before touching upon the Helensburgh of my youth it may be as well to state here how matters stood in regard to the number of houses which, above it, then graced the Loch side. Between the West Burn of Helensburgh and Row village, at the beginning of the century, there stood Ardencaule Castle and Inn, a cottage at the side of the road where Mr Dennistoun's house now stands, and these were all, save the farm houses on the hill, as far as my memory serves me, that were between these points. Above Row there were Ardenconnel House, the old House of Blairvaddick, Shandon House, Faslane House, near which are the ruins of an old chapel, a few roadside cottages, and a sparse sprinkling of farm houses. On Rosneath side, besides the Clachan and farm houses, there were only the Castle, the Clachan House, Barremman House, and two or three humble dwellings until Garelochhead village was reached.

What a change has passed over the region. Now

hundreds of charming residences there stand in all their pride of place, 'mid verdant lawns, on green shrub-besprinkled slopes or perched on craggy, wood-adorned knolls, as if they had sprung forth obedient to the potent wand of some magician haunted with a love of the beautiful. These combined with the natural beauties of the place, which are neither few nor small, make the scene as paradisaical a one as one could in reason look for in a world where, according to the poet

“ Some flowerets of Eden we still do inherit,  
But the trail of the serpent is over them all.”

It may be so, but when I stand 'mid these scenes fronting the north, where stand sublime the huge rugged rampart of the Argyllshire hills, and feast upon the softer beauties which these dominate, I imagine that I detect quite another sort of trail over all these than the one alluded to, namely, a trail of glory and of majesty testifying to the existence of a Supreme Being possessed of quite other characteristics than those represented as belonging to the arch-enemy of mankind, yclept the old Serpent.





## CHAPTER II.

NOTICE OF THE SO-CALLED RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENT WHICH WAS DEVELOPED AROUND THE CAMPBELL FAMILY OF FERNICARRY, ROSNEATH, SPEAKING IN VARIOUS TONGUES AND THE WORKING OF MIRACLES GONE IN FOR BY THEM.

ON August 4th, 1827, an old Dumbarton Burgess whose diary, which was begun in 1815, and finished in 1832, is now in my possession, paid a visit to Fernicarry, on Gareloch side, six miles from the Clachan of Rosneath, where dwelt the family of Campbells, who for a time made such a noise in the religious world. One of their number (Mary) claimed to be prophetess, a worker of miracles, and a speaker in unknown tongues. But the member of the household that our worthy old burgess went forth to see was Isabella, who had been confined to her chamber and bed for nearly two years. "Yes, Isabella," our yearning old friend says in his diary, "I will ere long see your happy bedchamber, and be comforted together with you."

The scenery of the Gareloch in a small way seems to have moved his pious soul by its charms, but he could not afford

to waste much paper and ink on a description of it, as he says, "It was not Nature, but the God of Nature that I wished to adore—in all His works, but especially in His work of redemption. It was not the noble mansion (the Duke of Argyll's), encompassed with woods and lawns which grace the left of its entrance; it was not the thriving crowded watering place which stretches itself along the right, nor hill nor dale nor glossy surface of the lake that (here he gets ravelled) caught my attention, but a work of grace and spiritual reviving lately begun by means of different individuals, but going forward under the fostering care of the humble, pious, self-denying minister of Row (the late Rev. John M'Leod Campbell, D.D). May the gracious work not terminate till the happy contagion affects the whole parish, and the region around partakes of its glorious influence. Immanuel, the work is Thine; succeed it with Thy blessing. Father, gather the outcasts into Thy fold. We landed at Fernicarry House, a dwelling replete with history to the Christian mind, which knows that under its honoured roof dwells two King's daughters—Isabella and Mary. This gave double interest to the surrounding scenery. By the latter (he does not mean the scenery, but Mary) we were kindly received, as well as by the other members of the family. Isabella—the long chastened Isabella—on her sick bed welcomed us cordially as the children of the same heavenly Father, as sojourners (he invariably used this word in a wrong sense; journeyers is the term he should have used) to the same city of rest. She lay a picture of resignation, contentment, and acquiescence to the divine will. Affliction appeared to have made great progress on the once elegant and beauteous frame, traces of which still appeared. I hastily inquired for her, spoke of the Lord's dealings, and

the happy end of all our trials. She was (in turn) the rehearser; I became the auditor, or listener. Her conversation was truly heavenly, pathetic, and engaging. I said she would greatly exhaust herself. I therefore deemed it prudent to retire, after being about ten minutes with her. Before leaving the house she wished me to call again at her bedside. I did so. The request was 'Mr——, will you be kind enough to pray shortly with me' 'I would deem it a privilege' I replied, 'but the steamboat is just putting off.' 'Well, if time does not allow, better leave it undone, than be hurried or confused' (was the very sensible reply of the lass). She gently pressed my hand. 'Farewell, Isabella,' I involuntarily replied. 'I hope to meet thy happy spirit in the land of heavenly bliss.'

On the 11th of November, 1828, Isabella Campbell dies, and her sister Mary, the prophetess, indites a letter, in regard to which the diary proceeds in this wise:—"The pious, the devoted, the angelic Isabella (that is piling it up) is gone—gone to the regions of unclouded repose and unending felicity." I have been favoured with a glance of her sister Mary's letter to a Christian friend announcing her demise. The following is a copy:—

'My beloved Friend in the Lord,—Our dearest and highly-prized Isabella is now in glory; she died about half an hour ago. O! the closing scene was most magnificent. A kind of celestial lustre seemed to pervade her whole countenance, indicative of the joy and wonder which the spirit realised. O! let us have your prayers. I am strengthened in a way most astonishing to myself. My dear Friend,—I am even enabled to rejoice mightily at this moment, and when I think of my behaviour on former occasions I am constrained to exclaim: "This surely is the Lord's doing," and it ought to be marvellous in my eyes. Much—much riches did she pass from her lips for the past three days of her life. But



I can add no more at present. My kind love to Mrs M'G—. You must try and prepare her mind for the intelligence. O! take care how she hears it. Tell her to think of me—to pray for me. Tell her also that I feel that Jesus liveth, and therefore I cannot be destitute of happiness. Pray for my poor mother, brother, and sisters.—  
Yours in Jesus,

MARY CAMPBELL.

Helensburgh, 11th Nov., 1827.'

It may be briefly noticed that some time after her sister's death Mary took to her bed with disease of the lungs, and there were great goings on in the house. It was like a cried fair. All the enthusiasts of the country were gathered together. An inspired Port-Glasgow carpenter, in the spirit of prophesy, commanded her in a letter to rise from her bed, as she was healed in answer to the prayers of the righteous. She did rise therefrom, and did live, proving that betimes "fancy kills and fancy cures."

She married another tremendously exalted Christian [in his own estimation] named Caird, and the two pro-created children and found out in their happy experience that the world had much to bestow upon professors of religion, if they professed plenty (and certainly neither husband nor wife lacked in that respect). He blossomed into an angel of the Holy Apostolic Church; and as for the sainted Mary we must in all gallantry suppose that she was never anything else than an angel. Before her restoration to health (which created an immense sensation amongst the Irvingites and other believers in the gifts of miraculous healing, prophesying, raising of the dead, walking on the water, and speaking in unknown tongues, having been restored to the church), her brother fell sick with the family trouble, consumption, and he could not get peace to die for the hubbub

that was going on in the house, which was constantly filled with religious fanatics of various degrees of intensity.

The late Rev. Mr Story, then parish minister, manfully rebuked Mary the holy for encouraging such goings on, to the great hurt and detriment of her brother's peace, and for reward received a letter from her saintship declining to put a stop to the proceedings, as she had it from the Holy Spirit that the time had not come when He wished those visitors complained of to depart, but when the hour arrived, then He would warn His servant to bid them go hence in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. At her brother's death a horrible ceremony was gone through for the purpose of restoring him to life again. This poor sick world is not to be healed by such miserably wicked, absurd goings on.

About this period I heard the Rev. Mr Irving preach on a Fast-day in the Row Church-Yard to a large assemblage. His text I forget, but he so warmed to his work that he stripped the coat off his back and went at it with a will in his shirt sleeves, his right arm rising and falling like a flail thrashing the air. In the Session House Mary Campbell held forth, in an unknown tongue, to as many as it could hold. Although it was in no language of any tribe on earth that she spake, yet there was a weird fascination in her utterances, which had a good deal of the mellifluous flow of the Italian about them.



### CHAPTER III.

THE REV. JOHN MACLEOD CAMPBELL OF ROW AND HERESY CASE  
GOT UP AGAINST HIM.

**H**ERESY, or a suspicion of heresy, in a minister is always amongst Scotch church-going people a matter of intense interest—an all-absorbing passion. And not merely to religious men and women does the subject possess this peculiar fascination, but it does so also to that large section of the community who, while they have been educated in religious truth, yet cannot, in any strict sense of the term, be called religious. Scotchmen, from their national training and habits, have a keen scent intuitively for heresy, and the result has been that Scotch ecclesiastical courts used to spend, and still do spend, a great deal of their time in examining and trying cases of unsound doctrine. A minister might preach mere negations, or barren morality, and his discourses be of the driest and, therefore, most unimpressive character and the result be, that the most perfect religious apathy might exist amongst his hearers, yet his preaching would pass muster; but the moment he uttered something which smacked of heresy the dulllest ears would be horrified thereat, and the most slumberous

soul would awake, and make the echoes resound with the cry of "Libel him." Men who are utterly incapable of determining civil or political questions of any great "pith or moment," and men whose lives give no practical evidence of their possession of any part of Christianity, these alike set themselves in judgment on the most profound mysteries of our faith. Things which God has but partially revealed are all as plain to them as the proverbial pike-staff, and the great problems which have profoundly exercised and baffled the grandest human minds they can dogmatise about with the most perfect confidence,

The difficulty with Church Courts nowadays is not how to get up a case of heresy, for that is comparatively easy, but to dispose of it after it is once set agoing is to them somewhat puzzling. Notably this has been illustrated in recent times by two of the leading Presbyterian bodies. Each has tried its hand on the matter, and each has found the undertaking involving the solution and disposal of the questions at issue therein too momentous for summary action, and the results have been anything but happy. In contrast thereto one cannot but be struck with astonishment at the short and easy methods of reaching a verdict on the bare issues evinced in many of the heresy trials of a bygone age. Then there were, as a rule, no conferences for mutual explanations afforded, nor qualified adherences admissable to certain propositions, although John MacLeod Campbell was afforded such an opportunity, which he declined to avail himself of. Orthodoxy, in a bygone age, had had a well-defined boundary line, outside of which a man was simply and unquestionably a heretic, and to be dealt with as such somewhat summarily. Nothing can better illustrate this than the case now under review.

Perhaps no heresy case ever excited a deeper interest in the religious circles of Scotland than did that which is known as the "Row Heresy" one, and no doctrines, we are certain, have had a wider influence on the pulpit teaching of to-day than the general views of divine truth then taught by the Rev. John MacLeod Campbell, who was for their enunciation proclaimed heretic, and cast out the Church.

It must, however, be admitted by the candid historian that Mr Campbell by his countenancing the Campbell family of Fernicarry in their wild goings on in matters appertaining to religion, and by the *outré* notions which he expressed in regard to the Holy Ghost guiding him, for instance, when in the pulpit to the choosing of a suitable text, &c., gave the enemy cause to blaspheme. That sort of doctrine runs so contrary to the canny Scottish character that, all things considered, while I deplore, yet I cannot wonder much at the result which deprived the Church of Scotland of the services of a man of whom any Church might have been proud. I knew all the libellers of the reverend gentleman, amongst whom there was my eldest brother, Captain Alexander M'Leod, and they were shrewd, intelligent men, who clung to the love of the old form of setting forth the faith once delivered to the Saints, and entertained a holy horror of anything smacking of a divergence therefrom. It is my candid opinion that the twelve who instituted the action against the Rev. Mr Campbell were moved thereto by pure motives and a sincere love for the Church of their fathers.

The reverend gentleman's predecessors in Row Parish seem to have been commonplace men, whose preaching and parochial work did not rise above a very ordinary level.

Little is known of them beyond their names, and religion at the time of Mr Campbell's ordination was at a very low ebb within the bounds of his clerical jurisdiction. The subject of our memoir was the son of a minister of the Scottish Establishment, the Rev. Dr. Campbell of Kilninver, and was appointed to the cure of souls at Row, in September, 1825, being then a comparatively young man, but withal deeply imbued with a sense of the awful responsibilities of his calling. It was not long until he fathomed the condition of the people placed under his charge. He found many of them ignorant, indifferent, and in, alas ! too many cases irreligious and immoral, and the question as to how to reach their hearts and awaken within them a genuine interest in spiritual things stirred him to earnest wrestling with God in prayer, and to the anxious reviewing of his position in connection with such a flock. Consequently his preaching became distinguished for fervour and personal application, and public interest began to be centered on him. By degrees he came to recognise what has ofttimes become plain enough to other minds, that people saturated from infancy with phraseology of a certain stereotyped theological cast ceased after a time to be impressed therewith. To arouse such the eternal verities must be presented in a new garb, and set forth in a more attractive form. Mr. Campbell did not profess to have discovered any new truths ; but a prayerful study of the Bible, and earnest desire to bring men under the divine influence, led him to invest the old evangel with a vitality and earnestness much lacking in many of the pulpit utterances of that period. A master had arisen in Israel ! His winged words found their way into the hearts of not only his own parishioners, but into those of others over a large

tract of country. There was a shaking among the dry theological bones of the musty past. They were being clothed with the fair flesh of newer forms. Of course, Mr. Campbell's mode of doing this was the theme of frequent discussion, more especially from 1827 downwards. The more that the power of such preaching became manifest the more the larger number of his clerical brethren distrusted him. One of their number (the Rev. Mr. Story, of Rosneath) stuck to him, firm and immovable, through good and bad report. Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Campbell's name and fame began to be tainted with alleged heretical teaching. His noble, self-sacrificing life was a standing reproach to that of those who, having a form of Godliness, wanted the substance, who had a name to live and yet were spiritually dead. Most of the Row minister's co-presbyters gave him the cold shoulder, and closed their pulpits against him. Then, in the years 1828 and 1829, a memorial, signed by some half-dozen of his hearers, charging their minister with preaching dangerous and obnoxious tenets, was presented to the Presbytery of Dumbarton, which fell through; but in 1830 there was another memorial, signed by twelve parishioners, which was formulated into a libel, notwithstanding a counter memorial, signed by about eighty householders in the parish of Row. The complaint was sustained, the judgment of the General Assembly taken upon it, and instructions given by that august tribunal to proceed with the investigation of the case. The Presbytery did so, and at length Mr. Campbell was libelled—the charge against him being that he taught doctrines contrary to Scripture, and the Confession of Faith, having more especial regard to his views on the universality of the Atonement, and of

pardon flowing to the world through the death of Christ ; as also to his opinions that the doctrine of assurance is of the essence of faith. After a very perfunctory inquiry the libel was found proven by the Presbytery ; it was then appealed to the Synod, and was by them sent up to the General Assembly for their decision. That final tribunal, in a thin house after midnight, and after a very cursory consideration of the momentous questions at issue in the case, by a vote of 119 to 6 passed sentence of deposition upon one of the noblest, truest-hearted men who ever ministered within the pale of any Church. It would have been well for the credit of our national Zion if that sentence could have been blotted out of its registers by the tears of a repentant Church ! There it remains, however, and will remain, for the wonderment of future ages ! Before the decision was arrived at the accused's aged father, a member of the Assembly, in the course of a speech which he made, said—"I bow to any decision to which you may think it right to come, Moderator. I am not afraid for my son : though his brethren cast him out, the Master whom he serves will not forsake him ; and while I live I will not be ashamed to be the father of so holy and blameless a son."

The heretical teaching for which Mr Campbell was deposed is just that which is to day proclaimed from hundreds of pulpits in the land without being cavilled at—viz., that "Christ died for all—faith, the believing that if so, then Christ died for me ; and assurance the confidence towards God as forgiving my iniquities and saving me from sin and death, which I have when I come to believe Him." That is the summary of his heresy. He also held that the general mode of the teaching of the Church in regard to the doctrine of election had a tendency to make men



fatalists, and in holding that view I think he was quite sound.

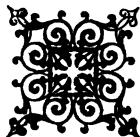
After his deposition Mr Campbell preached for some time wherever he was invited so to do. To very large gatherings of people he lifted up his voice in Oban, Greenock, Bonhill, Helensburgh, and many other places. In 1833 he settled into a regular sphere of labour in Glasgow, presiding over a congregation there without fee until 1859, when infirm health obliged him to withdraw from the same, and retire into private life in the same city. By that time he had the satisfaction of knowing that his views were generally accepted as correct, and also of feeling that he had regained the esteem and confidence of the religious world at large. An ardent affection for the early scenes of his ministry caused him two years before his death to choose the Garelochside as the home of his old age. He being a comparatively wealthy man became proprietor of a very pretty house and grounds in Rosneath, to which he gave the suggestive name of Achnashie (the field of peace), and from that sweet haven of blissful rest many of his letters were dated, and there he dispensed a liberal hospitality to and enjoyed the delightful companionship of troops of old attached friends. His intercourse with the Rev. Dr. Story, the present highly-cultured incumbent of the parish, son of his staunch old friend, was one of unalloyed pleasure, and a great source of comfort to him in his declining years. He died on February 15th, 1872, as full of years as of honours, and was followed to his last resting-place by many sorrowing friends. His somewhat chequered career over, he now sleeps the sleep of the just in the auld kirkyaird of Rosneath, close by the side of the late minister thereof, so that they, being united

in the spirit while yet in the flesh, in death they are not divided. Of a verity they were a pair of whom any district might be proud.

As will be seen from Dr. Campbell's published correspondence as well as from "his life," he was a paragon of amiability and gentleness—a more holy and humble Christian minister and one possessing such high mental endowments, could hardly be met with in or out of the Establishment. His labours in Row, although all too short, were yet long enough to leave their impress upon the characters not only of those who were in the past generation distinguished therein for their consistent piety and usefulness, but also upon many who were awed by his apostolic fervour into assuming a form of godliness if they had it not, so that by his ministrations the breath of society in the parish was sweetened. Parties anxious to be more fully posted up in regard to the Row Heresy Case and the Fernicarry fanatical excitement are recommended to read the Rev. Dr. Story's life of his father, a deeply interesting, most admirable work.

The Rev. Dr. Campbell's views on religious subjects are fully developed in two of his published works—namely, one on "The Atonement," and the other, "Thoughts on Revelation." To ordinary readers these works are somewhat disappointing, in spite of their containing fresh and vigorous thoughts, the manner of treatment is so elaborate and complex that the peruser's patience is too severely taxed. More admirable by far is the mode which he has adopted with his letters. These are couched in terms of charming simplicity and bathed in love, and afford a much better illustration of his general style and mode of expression.

In drawing this sketch to a close, it may be stated that it is almost impossible to over-estimate the influences which the Rev. Dr. MacLeod Campbell's views have exercised on the religious thought of the present day, regarding the relative positions of the Bible and the Confession of Faith, No student of passing events can fail in coming to the conclusion that these opinions have to a large extent liberalised the theology of the latter half of the nineteenth century in this our dear old country of Scotland, and that the obloquy and scorn that the subject of our memoir had in his early ministry to endure has been, under the over-ruling providence of God, fraught with blessings not only to the Church thereof, but to the world at large.





## CHAPTER IV.

### BIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT NAPIER OF WEST SHANDON HOUSE.

**O**NE man soweth and another reapeth. Seldom doth the active, restless, discursive brain of the man of inventive genius conjure forth solid pudding for its possessor. Needing bread, he not infrequently getteth a stone. After his day's work hath been finished, and the solemn-visaged Angel of Death giveth repose to that brain which hath been so prolific, and rest to the active, wearied fingers, then betimes there shineth forth star-like from the funereal gloom the effulgence of his good deeds and noble strivings after noble ends, and the world sayeth, "Verily a great man hath dwelt with us for a season, and we honoured him not as we ought. Come, let us grave his name with an iron pen on a shapen rock, and place it where men most do congregate, and thus in some measure atone for our neglect."

Thus it fared with Henry Bell, one of the world's greatest benefactors, but thus it did not fare with the subject of this memoir, who plucked to some purpose the fruits of his great forerunner's ill-requitted labours.

Robert Napier, engineer, was born in Walker's Close, Dumbarton, on the 18th day of June, 1791. His father, James Napier, was a quiet, sober, and industrious master blacksmith and millwright, and a freeman of the burgh (as a matter of course), whose residence and smithy were latterly at No. 98 High Street. Young Robert Napier received at the Grammar School of his native town a good, sound, and somewhat liberal education, which embraced the classics and mathematics. For his knowledge of and deftness in architectural and mechanical drawing he was indebted to a Mr Trail. In 1807, he was apprenticed to his father, and a considerable time before his probationary period had expired, he proved himself to be a workman whose abilities were decidedly above the average, more especially in ornamental smith work, a qualification which he continued to be proud of to the close of his earthly career. He also acquired, while in his father's employ, a pretty extensive acquaintance with millwright work. At the age of twenty he left the paternal roof and went to Edinburgh to push his fortune, with his father's blessing on his head, and a five-pound note, along with a certificate of character from the parish minister, in his pocket. As it was a few weeks before he got a situation, his slender stock of cash was exhausted before his first pay was due, and even when it was received it did not replenish his treasury very extensively, as the remuneration which he got for his week's work was the meagre sum of half a guinea, and on that sum per week he had to live for some time, until he secured a better appointment in the establishment of Robert Stevenson, the eminent lighthouse engineer, where he got a good class of work to execute, and comparatively good pay for the doing of it. After sojourning in the metropolis for

no very lengthened period he returned and wrought with his father again for a short time. His next move was to Glasgow, where he entered the employment of a Mr William Lang, whose principal business was the construction of manufacturing machinery.

In May, 1815, when barely twenty-four years of age, he started business on his own account, in the Greyfriars Wynd, of Glasgow. He was enabled to effect the purchase there of the tools and goodwill of a going tool manufacturing concern, with the aid of some little pecuniary assistance from his father. At the corner of the Wynd he fixed a sign with the inscription, "Robert Napier, engineer and blacksmith." In the course of time he removed his business from Greyfriars Wynd to the Camlachie Foundry, which had previously been occupied by his cousin, David Napier, and there—he who is the theme of my story began his prosperous career as an engineer by constructing an engine for a Dundee factory. In the year 1824 he manufactured there his first pair of marine engines. These were used for the propulsion of the paddle steamer "Leven," which had been built by Mr James Lang, of the Dumbarton Dockyard, for the traffic between that ancient Burgh and Glasgow. These have now been gifted to the Corporation of Dumbarton, by the Messrs Napier, sons of the deceased, and are exhibited at the Pier. Mr Napier's next move was from the Camlachie to the Lancefield Foundry, where he threw himself heart and soul into his business, with the most encouraging prospects. In 1826 he built the engines for the steamer "Eclipse," which plied between Glasgow and Belfast, and four years later he engined vessels for the Glasgow and Liverpool trade. In 1834 he supplied engines to the vessels belonging to the Dundee and London Shipping

Company. In 1835 he furnished the vessels "Bernice" and "Zenobia," belonging to the Hon. East India Company, with engines of 220 and 280 horse-power respectively. In 1840 he was entrusted with his first order from the British Government, having then supplied the machinery to the war vessels "Vesuvius" and "Stromboli." Between 1840 and 1865 he furnished engines for the entire "Cunard" fleet of paddle steamers, the wooden hulls of which had been built by Mr John Wood, of Port-Glasgow, and Messrs Steele & Co., of Greenock. In 1842 Mr Napier began the construction of iron river steamers, the late William Denny, of Dumbarton, being at this period his principal draughtsman. In 1854 there was launched from his building yard for the "Cunard" Company, the iron paddle steamer "Persia," of 3300 tons, which was at the time considered a marvel for size, speed, model, and finish. In 1860 the firm built the ironclad war-ship "Black Prince," of 6,200 tons, and 1,260 horse-power, for the British Navy, and down to his death he had been favoured with many orders from the Naval Department of Her Majesty's Government, for both warships and gunboats. The work turned out by him, for them, gave uniformly the highest satisfaction. At different periods several ironclad war-ships were launched from his yard for the Turkish and Danish Governments. In addition to the Governmental and other work enumerated in the foregoing, a very large tonnage of vessels of the highest class was turned out to the orders of foreign and British individual shipowners.

His wide-spread name and reputation as one of the most eminent men of the day in his profession, earned for him many distinctions. In 1855 he was elected a juror of the Paris Exhibition, when he received in acknowledgment of

his services, the gold medal of honour and the decoration of the Legion of Honour. At the 1862 London Exhibition, he acted as chairman of the jury on Naval Architecture, and at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, he officiated as a Royal Commissioner. In 1864 he was elected by his professional brethren to the distinguished, and by him much prized, position of President of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. He presided at their Glasgow meeting, and delivered the presidential address, which was of a highly instructive and practical kind. In 1868, the commandership of the most ancient order of the "Dannebrog" was conferred upon him by the King of Denmark, in recognition of the services that he as a shipbuilder had rendered to that country.

During the latter years of Mr Napier's life, he withdrew from taking any active part in the management of the business of his firm, which was then entirely managed by his sons, whom he had assumed as partners, and enjoyed his well-earned ease, at his beautiful marine residence of West Shandon ; spending much of his time in his favourite pursuit of collecting paintings, and articles of *vertu*, which his highly cultured taste and accurate and extensive knowledge enabled him to do with great advantage. His picture gallery and museum were considered to be one of the sights of the West of Scotland. Mr Napier had visitors many from all parts to examine his admirable collection of paintings, articles of *vertu*, and auld nick nackets, amongst the number were the Princess Louise and her husband, the Marquis of Lorne. It was the old engineer's invariable custom to give ladies who entered the precincts of his house what he called a Shandon salute—a kiss on the cheek—and he explained the fact and exemplified the style to the



Princess, to her and her husband's amazement. They of course were too well trained to show any symptoms of such a feeling possessing their bosoms, but all the same at the time they were pretty considerably astonished, although afterwards they spoke of the matter as rather a happy experience than otherwise, and Robert Napier's Shandon salute has afforded amusement to many a courtly circle.

At his charming retreat, full of years and crowned with honours, this truly great man—whom it is no abuse of terms, on account of his aristocratic presence and courtly bearing, to call one of nature's noblemen—breathed his last on Friday the 23rd, day of June 1876, at three o'clock in the morning, having entered a few days before, on his 86th year.

Upon the funeral day, which was the 27th of the month, fourteen hundred of the deceased's workmen, who had been brought to Dumbarton in a special train, marched to Dalreoch Toll, where they joined the funeral cortege, marching back to the Parish Church four deep; this contingent swelled up the funeral train to fully two thousand. This immense assemblage, the largest of its kind that ever was seen in the town, attended a religious service in the Established Church, which was conducted by the Rev. J. Laurie Fogo, of Row, and the Rev. Dr Jamieson, of Glasgow. The service was of a very solemn and impressive nature, and during the time of its continuance, the coffin lay in the vestibule of the church, covered with immortelles. At its conclusion the remains were removed, and laid in a grave beside that wherein his wife had been buried within a year previously. In addition to the large body of workmen referred to above, there were present at the funeral many gentlemen and mechanics belonging to the town, as

well as influential parties from all parts of the country. As a mark of respect for the memory of one of Dumbarton's greatest sons, the Parish Church bell was tolled. The industrial establishments of the Burgh ceased operations, and the principal places of business were closed. The vessels in the harbour and shipbuilding yards had flags flying half-mast high. Nor were there wanting other tokens needless to recapitulate of the esteem in which the illustrious departed was held in the town of his nativity. The remains of Mr and Mrs Napier have alone been interred in the Old Churchyard of Dumbarton since it was closed against interments in 1856, by edict of the Sheriff. The Campbell and Napier vaults were, however, specially excluded from the order. It was thought that in all probability Mr Napier's body would be the last that would be deposited in "*The Auld Kirk Yaird*," but since then his eldest son has been interred therein.

Mr Napier's heart always beat true to the town which has the honour of being his birthplace. At the New Year time annually, and during the currency of many years, he sent a handsome donation of money to the Kirk Session of Dumbarton for distribution amongst the deserving poor of the parish, and in many other ways did he testify his interest in the place and people. For instance, by his last will and testament he left £50 to the Kirk Session, to be applied by them in any way that they thought best for the good of the parishioners. A few months after Mr Napier's death his heritable and moveable estate was disposed of with the following results, viz. :—The magnificent collection of paintings and the valuable contents of his museum were brought to the hammer at Messrs Christie, Manson, & Wood's saleroom in London, where the sale created considerable

interest amongst collectors. The sale lasted twenty days, and the sum realised was £49,743 3s 6d. The shipbuilding yard and engineering establishments, with the plant connected with the same at Lancefield and Govan, were sold, after a spirited competition, for the large sum of £270,000. They were bought by a Glasgow writer for a client, Mr Kirk, engineer, who in company with a number of other gentlemen arranged to carry on the business under the old style or title of "Robert Napier & Sons." The Vulcan Foundry realised £38,310 5s 10d. Mr Napier's residence at West Shandon was bought for £37,500; but was sold almost immediately by the purchasers for the sum of £40,000 to a company who have converted it into a hydro-pathic establishment. Additional bedroom accommodation to the extent of about one hundred beds, has been added. West Shandon has proved itself quite a favourite health-restoring resort on account of its salubrity, charming situation, and the ease with which it can be reached from the great centres of population. The library of books was sold in Glasgow; the sale lasted four days, and the money drawn amounted to £2143 11s 6d. The furniture, plenishing, horses, carriages, plants, gardening and farming utensils, &c., were sold at West Shandon. It took five days for the disposal of the same, the gross drawings for the sale of which came to £3532 2s 6d, making an aggregate of £401,229 3s 4d for the realisation of the whole estate so far as yet disposed of. There are yet, however, two valuable plots of ground at Govan and other properties to sell, which it is supposed will bring the aggregate up to about half a million sterling. As will be seen by the above results, although the late Mr Napier was considered to be but an indifferent financier, yet he in his lifetime achieved

a very considerable pecuniary success, leaving a handsome fortune to his family. He also bequeathed to them a priceless heritage in a glorious name, which the lapse of ages will not dim.

In 1816, Mr Napier married his cousin, and left issue, two sons and three daughters, to whom he has handed down not only a handsome fortune, but a name of unspotted integrity. His life's work o'er, he sleeps well in the auld kirkyard of his native burgh, beside those whom on earth he loved dearly, and where the sharp rattle of the hammers, wielded by the Vulcans in the neighbouring shipyard, yield no inappropriate music over his resting place, as the sound of their hammers was by him a sound beloved. His life exemplified the portion of Scripture which says, "Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men."





## CHAPTER V.

### THE MURDER OF JOHN ARROL, SCHOOLMASTER OF ROW.

**R**HU, or "The Row," as it is termed by the natives, seems to have been fortunate in securing the services of a succession of good parochial teachers, notwithstanding the indifferent remuneration which the office yielded. Down almost to the advent of the School Board, teachers as a body all over Scotland were miserably paid, and only too often the dwelling considered as quite sufficient for such was a "but an' a ben," with the privilege added thereto of grazing for one cow. Yet in spite of these repellant circumstances, educated men possessing considerable gifts and culture were not infrequently found discharging faithfully all the drudgeries of the office for life cheerfully, though oftentimes unthanked by parents. and but slenderly revered betimes by pupils. It would be difficult to estimate the advantages which Scotsmen derived from the old parish schools. They for certain had much to do with the fostering of the noblest traits in the national character—namely, the love of learning for its own sake, and the spirit of self-reliance and dogged perseverance

which have characterised, in a marked degree, the sons of Caledonia at home and abroad for many centuries. The thoroughness of the work executed by these old pedagogues may, in a certain degree, be measured by the high position which have been won by their pupils in literature, law, philosophy, medicine, and in the Church. The school was common ground on which met the son of the laird and the son of the cottar, and it thereby created a healthy feeling between the different ranks of society, tending much to the national strength. Row, as we have indicated, seems to have possessed the services of a series of clever teachers. Mr John Lindsay (the predecessor of the present incumbent) was a beautiful type of the old parochial schoolmaster. He was a genial, warm-hearted, ready-witted man, trained for the Church, who had an endless stock of good old Lowland Scotch and Highland stories, which he told with inimitable pawkiness. These gifts and graces, united with his intense love for the classics and caligraphy, and the faithful discharge of all his multifarious duties as teacher, session clerk, inspector of poor, &c., endeared him to every one who had the privilege of knowing him. He was a perfect Nathaniel in whom there was no guile. But it is with the tragic fate of a remote predecessor of his that I have now more immediately to deal, and to the setting forth thereof I now proceed.

John Arrol, a man of over fifty, was in 1759, and had been for a number of years previous, teacher in "the Row." His times were stirring ones in the history of the country. He had seen the Rebellion of '45, watched with deep interest the sudden rise of the young Chevalier's fortunes, and their equally sudden collapse, with the destruction of all the long-cherished hopes of the Jacobite party. "Step

by step he had followed the news of the various successes which attended at first the arms of the Pretender, and waited, in those days of tardy communication, with deepest anxiety, for the results, until they, on the disastrous day at Culloden, culminated in the utter ruin of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the modern hero of Scotland's song and story. But whatever John Arrol's sympathies were, he carried no sword and wore no cockade, and he swore allegiance to King George, the third of that name, on his accession to the throne of the kingdom. John was a parish schoolmaster, and therefore bound to be a loyal subject of the king *de facto* and *de jure*, and besides he was a man somewhat advanced in years, in whom youthful enthusiasm in all probability was toned down considerably, and who would therefore be guarded in the expression of his opinions. Our hero personally and relatively had too much at stake to ally himself with the malcontents even had his sympathies gone that way, which we have no reason to think that they had, for he occupied the very honourable position of banker to the neighbourhood. Banks had not then covered the land with their branches. There existed then only three, and these confined their operations to large towns. The thrifty folks in remote places had, as a rule, no more eligible place than the chest or the "hugger" for storing past their savings. Arrol was not only the custodian of the small savings of economical farmers and fishermen, but he lent the same at interest in the interests of his customers when a safe outlet for the money presented itself. My grandfather, who resided in Row Parish, was one of those who so trusted him with his savings, and he lost his little all by his tragic end. That Arrol occupied such a position of trust showed the confi-

dence and esteem in which he was held by the parishioners—a confidence which many years of upright conduct in the discharge of his trust had considerably strengthened. In addition to the office of teacher he held that of session-clerk, and it is very probable that he also officiated as precentor, that being an appointment not unfrequently conjoined with the others.

Such was the position of matters in 1759. Occasionally the small sums which Arrol lent out were difficult of recovery. Money was scarce, and opportunities of meeting with debtors comparatively few, these being at Dumbarton Market, Luss Fair, or on rent or Court days. On such occasions debtors and creditors met, and adjusted accounts, and doubtless withal payment had to be sought for more diligently and under much greater difficulty than at the present.

Amongst those who had borrowed money from Arrol was a man named Cunningham, who resided in Dumbarton. Cunningham owed him thirty pounds sterling—a large sum in those days, when money was more valuable than it is now by far. Hearing unfavourable reports of this man, he started one day to uplift the money from him, having previously called it up. He arrived at Dumbarton safely, and was seen by many in the company of the man he came in quest of. He did not reach home that night. As he was a man of very methodical habits, his non-appearance for several days caused an alarm to be raised, which had the effect of turning out the Rowites *en masse* to scour the country side in search of him, dead or alive. Messengers were also despatched to the county town, but their united efforts were barren of results—no trace of him could be found. About three weeks after this search was made



the dead body of the murdered schoolmaster was found floating in the Leven near the castle. When it was got ashore, it was ascertained that the mode adopted to give poor Arrol his quietus was a stab with a knife or dagger in the left breast, which must have done its work instantaneously. There were neither money nor valuables found on his person. It was quite evident that the body had been but recently consigned to the river, as the inside of his pockets were dry.

It is reported by tradition, although I would not like to vouch for its correctness, that when the relatives and friends of the deceased wished to carry his body home for interment in the Row Kirkyard, the authorities of the burgh interfered with their arrangements, and compelled them to inter the body in the parish in which it was found. The floating tradition also gave out that the Castle threatened to fire upon them if they took it away. Yielding to circumstances too potent for them to resist, they buried the remains in the south-east portion of the Parish Kirkyard of Dumbarton, about mid-way between Castle Street and Messrs. Macmillan's shipbuilding yard, but rather nearer the latter, where the headstone and grave can still be seen by the curious in such matters. This is the inscription that is on the tombstone :—

“ Here Lyes the body  
of John Aroll  
Schoolmaster at ye  
Row, who Died februar the  
2, 1760 Aged 52  
years

omnibus est Odio  
Cruditat et simu—  
latio Repugnat  
Amicitie.”

. “Cruelty is hateful to all, and insincerity is repugnant to friendship.”

The turf covering his grave right over the spot where the dagger had forced an entrance into the citadel of life, and released the imprisoned spirit, was bare, blasted, and accursed ; the kindly dews and rains of heavens fell upon it in vain. In vain, also, was it repeatedly sown with grass and other seeds. Rich green turfs were even taken from different parts of the country at various times, and carefully placed over the plague spot, but they caught the infection and died. Soil was brought from afar and laid upon the damned circle, upon which the grass might spring up and live, but all was fruitless. There it remained, a terribly striking memento of a cruel and wicked deed. My brother Donald, now gone to his rest, full of years, when a youth was connected with the Dumbartonshire Volunteers, then quartered at the Castle, and he, in common with numbers of others, visited this wonderful grave, and by shedding back the rank grass which hung over the traditional spot, he found the earth bare as represented. I suggested to him that I thought it exceedingly likely that so many hunters after the horrible, using their hands as he had done, would prevent the grass from growing upon that particular place. "'Deed, man," said he, "maybe you're richt. I never thocht on that." After the lapse of a number of years the grave was opened to receive another tenant. After the clods of the valley were happed around him, the curse was withdrawn, and the grass grew, so that the bare bald spot has seemingly disappeared for ever, and only lives in the remembrance of the very oldest of the inhabitants.

The man Cunningham, who was owing Arrol the thirty pounds sterling, when lying on his death-bed confessed that he was his murderer, and stated that he paid

#### 44 *Arrol's Murderer Makes Confession of His Crime.*

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over the money to Arrol, and got a receipt for the same under his hand, and then despatched him with a dagger which lay conveniently tempting. He rifled the body, and hid it up one of the disused chimneys of the house, where, shortly after, it was discovered by his servant girl, who received such a shock that, fortunately for him, she went raving mad. At a convenient season, upon a pitch dark night, he carried off the tell-tale corpse upon his back to the river-side, and launched it forth to sink or swim. Having made that revelation, he breathed his last, and went to where he had to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

Cunningham was suspected from the very first to have been Arrol's murderer, and was asked, when the body was recovered from the Leven, to undergo the trial by touch, as it was then the belief that if the murderer but touched the body of his victim, the wound would bleed. His friends, however, advised him by no means to undergo the test, as the wound also would bleed if the body was touched by a man who had shaved on a Sunday, so that if he had ever shaved on that day, then the result might fasten the charge of murder upon him. The Rev. Mr Freebairn, the parish minister, who was present, stated that he had in his time shaved on a Sunday, and that he therefore, to test the force of that objection, would touch the corpse and see what results would follow. He did so, and no wound bled in response. That difficulty having been got rid of, Cunningham was again urged to clear himself by the ordeal of touch, but he resolutely declined.

It is wonderful to think that such an absurd notion should have lingered in the land to so very near our own time. Verily, these old superstitions die hard.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ARDENCAPLE M'AULAYS (AND THE ARDENCAPLE ANGELS, ETC.).

THIS, at one time, powerful and territorially grand family had their descent from a younger son of the second Alywn, Earl of Lennox. The first trace of their settlement here as local magnates is in the latter part of the thirteenth century. Their estate seemed to have stretched from near the modern village of Cardross on the east to near the head of the Gareloch on the west, embracing, of course, the barony of Maligs, on which Helensburgh now stands. There were two residences on the estates, Arden caple and Faslane. About two hundred years ago the decline of the house began in the extravagance of its then laird, Aulay M'Aulay and his four successors in the estates completed the ruin which he began, another Aulay, the last of the old house, completed arrangements which his father began for selling what was left of the family property. Everything had gone to wreck and ruin with them. Their residence at Arden caple became uninhabitable on account of the roof of it having fallen in compelling Aulay to shift his quarters to Faslane ; latterly this also went the way of all the rest of the property, and the landless heir of a long

line had to take refuge at Laggary, where he died in or about 1767, and the house sunk to rise no more. The Maligs part of the property passed to Sir John Shaw of Greenock, who sold it to the Colquhoun family, and the castle and ground around Ardencape went to the Argylls, and from them passed to the Colquhouns, from whom the castle has been leased by H. E. C. Ewing, Esq., of Strathleven, Lord Lieutenant of the county of Dumbarton. Having given this rapid sketch of the at one time illustrious house of the M'Aulays of Ardencape, who had the right in their time of Pit and Gallows, I will now proceed to tell a legend which I heard from my grandfather, who died in his 100th year, and gave shelter in his time to deserters from "Charlie's" army when they were retreating from the north of England homewards by the Highlandman's Road, which was then every other body's road, as the present turnpike one was not then formed. The way that these fugitives marched from Dumbarton was by a hillside path, which took them on to Ardencape Hill, where my forbear's dwelling-place was. After they were rested and refreshed as well as the modest means of his establishment would allow, they pursued their journey along the ridge of the hills by way of Faslane, passing Tambui, on the height above Finart, and Craganbreck, on to Arrochar, from which point they, as best as they could, would pursue their flight to the North "Countree." The legend poured into my young soul by my grandsire is entitled

THE ARDENCAPE ANGELS.

"Aulay M'Aulay,  
Knight o' Cairndhu,  
Provost o' Dumbarton,  
An' Bailie o' the Rhu."

A persecutor of God's saints, was a bold, bad man, who lent himself willingly to a corrupt government as an instrument to destroy root and branch the Covenanters who were then manfully battling for civil and religious freedom. After a stormy, eventful, blood stained career, he lay on his death-bed, on a boisterous day, in a backward season—

“ When the arrowy rain came down in slanting lines

And wind that grand old harper smote his thunder harp of pines.”

as an accompaniment to the rude ditty which old Ocean chanted in tones majestic not far from the castle walls. The room in which the grim old carle lay was an upper one in a tower of the castle. Its rough walls had been hastily covered with tapestry, and its floor with deer skins. On the “ dogs” in the capacious fireplace logs of wood had been laid and ignited, and an air of comfort began to pervade the gusty place ; but despite these, and the unremitting attention of his son and an ancient female domestic servant, the weak, weary, and depressed sufferer felt that the frost of death was fast congealing his life's blood. It so happened that a pair of jackdaws had set up house in the long-disused room vent, and were rearing a family therein. The burning wood after it had got fairly under way threw a strong heat and a flichter of sparks up the chimney, which made the quarters of the jackdaws more hot than comfortable. The old ones flew up, and the young ones unable to fellow their example, scrambled over their cradle and fluttered down upon the capacious hearthstone with muckle din. Young Ardencaple, somewhat tired with watching his sire, had been dozing on a settle at the fireside, but the unceremonious advent of these noisy visitors put slumber to flight, and, half awake, he cried out to his parent, “ Gudesake, faither, look what unearthly creatures hæe come

doon the lum." The faither glowerin' through the mists o' death upon the same, answered his boy, "Ne'er fash your thumb, my callant; it's a' beautifully ordered; these are jist the angels come doon tae bear ye're auld faither's saul hame to glory." "But, faither," said young Hopeful, "I'm a wee feared that they're no the richt colour o' the kin' o' angels that tak folk to the guid place, they're black." "Weel, weel," said the deein' laird, "E'en so they are my man, but the Ardencaple Angels were aye black. Members of auld hooses sich as ours are no escorted hame in the ordinary common fashion Guid be praised! An' noo that a' things seem ready for my departure. I'm also ready, an' maun say farewell tae ye, my son. Quit ye like a man, and be strong. Leeve like a man, and ye'll dee like a man as I'm daein' noo;" and having spoken thus, he gave up the ghost.

On the Ardencaple side of the loch, nearly opposite the point on which Rosneath inn stands, there is one of the most romantic glens in Scotland, in beauty quite excelling all compeers. In this mile-long glen, yclept "The Whistlers," in "*The Heart of Midlothian*," but anciently Aldonault, many queer things have of old been seen. It was a great howff of smugglers in bygone days. There was a tradition current in my youth about the wraith of a woman in grey appearing in its recesses at the black linn when the moon was full, wringing her shadowy hands and wailing out her plaint in a low, murmuring voice to the bubbling stream, that babbled near the spot where her lover had been cruelly slain by a rejected rival for her hand, and his body buried. Since the district got so heavily populated, the ghost hath departed.

Before that I at present cease to deal with this

particular part of the loch it may be stated that, according to the published testimony of the late Charles M'Laren of the *Scotsman*, an eminent geologist, the Rhu and Rosneath points are the remains of the terminal moraine of a huge glacier that filled the valley in the glacial period in our country's history. In the narrows between the points the water is only four fathoms deep, while a little below them it is nine fathoms, and a little above them it is 18 fathoms in depth. The lateral moraines of the glacier were detected by the same investigator on the hills on both sides of the loch. The groovings made by the glacier in its terrible onward march were also found indubitably by him on the rocks in this region. The presence of a great glacier in the far-off past was also beyond doubt made plain to him by the presence of large boulders of stone, which had been transported from considerable distances, the only known agents equal to such work being icebergs or glaciers, and he was convinced that the latter were the agents. The largest of the number of such boulders on the shore is at West Shandon gate, and weighs 80 tons. It is of mica slate, 14 feet in height, measuring about 40 cubic yards.







## Section II.

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### *MY REMINISCENCES OF HELENSBURGH.*

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#### CHAPTER VII.

##### REMINISCENCES OF THE HELENSBURGH OF THIS CENTURY.

**B**ELOVED Helensburgh, fairest of Clyde's fair watering-places, although not born within your borders, yet in you I have spent the major portion of my long life, and thou art linked in my memory with a thousand sweet and bitter recollections. I have had friends and I have had companions dear to me as my own soul, with whom I held sweet communion in thy midst, these have struck their tents like the Arabs, and have as quietly slipped away into the great, silent desert land from whose bourne no traveller returns, leaving me of all my generation standing alone, like a solitary tree on a heath awaiting the advent of the bitter biting blast that will soon lay me low in the dust. Before the "silver cord be loosed" or the "golden bowl be broken" at the fiat of the great angel Azrael and all communication between me and my fellows be quite

shut off, I would crave the ear of the public while I descant upon the Helensburgh of the early part of this century, and say a few words about some of its then inhabitants.

About the year 1802, the year in which Helensburgh was created a free burgh of Barony, I became a unit of its population and was sent to complete my education at its humble side school which still stands in King Street east of the well. For church accommodation in the town there was only that afforded by the Tabernacle or Congregational Chapel. Dissent then being at a very low ebb, the great majority of the inhabitants worshipped in the church of the parish at Row. I well-recollect of Provost Dixon of Dumbarton (who lived at Rockbank House here, and was Provost of this burgh also from 1811 to 1828) upon a Sunday when a blinding snow-storm came on during worship at Row, after service inviting all the Helensburgh contingent into the Row Inn and treating them to a liberal supply of the generous bluid o' John Barleycorn and afterwards considerably driving them home. A goodly sprinkling of the number upon whom the spirit of malt had been largely shed were all the better of a "leathern convenience."

We have seen that there was in the early days of Helensburgh a church and school in the burgh, but there was then no doctor within its bounds, Dr Hunter of Dumbarton being the party whose services were most frequently called into requisition by the seriously ailing Helensburghers. A medical man in fact was then seldom wanted. "Howdies" looked after the advent of little strangers, and there was hardly anything more momentous than a splitting headache after a drinking or a fighting bout troubled the early natives, and these primitive ones knew a most admirable cure for such evil which was come-atable at the easy rate of

a penny per glass, and to be had at dispensaries then termed change-houses, now irreverently called "pubs."

Although the town could not keep up a doctor yet it managed for a few years to support a theatre, which stood on a site now covered by the Municipal Buildings. During its brief existence the surrounding gentry gave it substantial support. About 1809 the Magistrates and Council of the town began to hold their courts in the theatre (which they ultimately acquired by purchase), and they continued to do so down to the period of the erection of the present handsome and commodious Town's House. Under the town's original charter the government of the infant community was entrusted to a Provost, two bailies, and four Councillors who were elected by the feuars. The offices were then not much coveted, as parties elevated to the honours preferred not infrequently to pay the fine of ten shillings or five shillings exigible on their declinature of the major or minor offices respectively, rather than accept. The Bailies and Councillors, who belonged to the Established Church, sat in a seat set apart for them in the Row Kirk, and a fine of one shilling was imposed for each offence on those who neglected to sit therein with their fellows. On big occasions the two town's officers with halberts attended the Council to church. The old theatre, if not a thing of beauty, was at all events a very useful building, for besides holding the municipal dignitaries while they sat in solemn conclave, it held the Public Subscription Library got up by £4 shares owned by parties connected with the town. This useful institution was broken up about the year 1850 and the books divided by lot amongst the shareholders. In its palmy days the proprietors dined annually in the Baths Hotel. Mr Turner, late Town-Clerk of Glasgow, was frequently

present on these joyous occasions, and so were Messrs. L. M'Lachlan and W. Bain, bakers, ex-Provost Breingan, David Waddell, Esq., Capt. Alexander M'Leod, the Rev. Mr. Anderson, and a number of others; most of whom have gone over to the majority. While one church sufficed for the town, yet there was in it, early in the century, two hotels—the Baths and the Tontine—and as many public-houses as there are at the present day. There was almost no difficulty then in anyone getting a license who asked for it.

When I was a lad there were queer tales afloat in regard to the primitive fashion in which justice was administered by the Bailies, who pretty often sat in state in Jamie Colquhoun's change-house at the old granary to try delinquents, the fines imposed on whom were sometimes, it is alleged, converted into *acqua vitae*, and "punished" by the Court and the panels who stood at the bar, for the "guid o' the hoose." On one occasion two worthies were taken before one of the Bailies who sat in one of the rooms of the above named "pub," charged with fighting with each other. The Bailie rated the officer soundly for bothering him with such a trifling case, and advised the fighting men, if they had not punished each other sufficiently and to their heart's content, just to go outside into a quiet corner and finish the job, and he hoped they would be wiser men thereafter. A few pages further on in this same chapter, more is said about the primitive state of matters which then obtained in regard to the administration of justice.

Before the advent of steamboats, communication was kept up for passengers with Dumbarton and Glasgow by coaches, which ran several days in the week, and for goods by means of the carriers' vans. There were two of these latter on the

road in my early days—one owned by Jardine and one by M'Farlane. The connection with Greenock and other places on the Firth was kept up by quite a fleet of well-equipped wherries, owned by Gay, M'Kinlay, M'Leod, and others. These were quite open for a consideration to embark in illegal as well in legal enterprises. Malt was by them run to the haunts of the smugglers on the various loch-sides, and the liquid product thereof in due season was, under cloud of night, taken to Greenock, Helensburgh, or Dumbarton, for disposal to parties who were in the confederacy. They were wonderfully successful as a rule in evading the enemy, but betimes some of their number were captured and taken to Dumbarton, and it may be interesting for some of my readers to learn how one of these hardy fellows fared within the old Tolbuith of that ancient burgh.

In 1820 a very intimate friend and relation of mine happened to be incarcerated therein, on account of his connection with a smuggling of whisky adventure. He was one of fifteen who were in custody for the same offence at that time. The northern and western districts of the county were those in which smuggling operations were most extensively carried on, and it was these districts which furnished the fifteen hardy fellows who were in durance vile. A Mr Brown who was of an enquiring turn of mind, called one day to inspect the jail. He was perfectly confounded and astonished, when he was ushered into the apartment which contained the smuggling party, and saw their respectable appearance, which was so different from that of ordinary gaol-birds. When he departed he deposited in the hands of Mr M'Coll, the gaoler, the sum of twenty shillings, to pay for a refreshment for the decent lads he had just left. The room which they occupied was right over the Town Council

Hall, and was a large, roomy place, and cheerful withal, as the windows overlooked the High Street of the burgh, opposite the Elephant Inn. It formed their living room by day and their sleeping room by night, their beds being made on the floor when night approached, and stowed away in the morning. There was a huge fireplace at the west end of it. The party were divided into messes of five each, and they each took their turn of cooking. The dinner of broth, beef, and potatoes was got up at the cost of twopence halfpenny a head, and that for no stinted quantity, but for as much as they could conveniently stow away. Government allowed at that time sixpence a-day for the maintenance of those who were in custody for the infringement of the Excise laws, they being in the position not of criminals but of debtors to the Government, because of their inability to pay the fine of thirty pounds that was imposed upon them. Along a passage communicating with the smugglers' den there was a condemned cell, called "Bilsland's Hole."

In it there was fixed strongly into the wall a massive chain, with apparatus at the end for safely securing the legs of the occupants. It received its name from one Bilsland, who, when under sentence of death, robbed the gallows of its prey by taking away his own life. He was buried at Poindfauld, in unconsecrated ground. In the attics there was a large floored space the whole length of the building, in which, among other things, were contained a large number of public manuscripts in connection with burgh matters, to which the prisoners had access when they were up there on an exploring expedition. They were used by them for miscellaneous purposes, and thus many valuable historical documents were irretrievably lost. In it, also, the prisoners kept the necessary apparatus for playing fast and

loose with the gaol regulations. There they had a long rope for lowering down any of their number who were anxious to make their escape.

The bribe paid by the runaways to their companions for their friendly offices was the price of a bottle of whisky, which was then only eighteenpence. The money thus obtained was converted into the national beverage by the following means :—A boy who was in the confidence of the inmates, was pretty generally on the look-out for a string being lowered from the top storey, with a stocking containing an empty bottle and the requisite cash to pay for the filling of it. It was duly filled, popped into the stocking, and speedily hoisted up and “punished.” There was also up in the garret a saw, which the denizens of that unfashionable establishment termed a “steel doctor,” with which they cut the stanchions which guarded the windows of the prison, and when they were got rid of there was no difficulty in the way of prisoners getting off Scot free upon the payment of the penalty above mentioned.

There was yet another mode of escaping from “quod,” and that was by means of a long double cord, thrown over the top of the door, at the bottom of the stair which led to their quarters, and to which they had access. In the bucht of the cord they fastened a piece of wood, three or four inches long, which by skilful manipulation, they managed to get into the handle of the large key which was in the lock on the outside, and by operating upon the double string they succeeded in opening therewith the door. They then daundered quietly out for a dram, and came back at their canny leisure, well primed, going contentedly to their own quarters.

The gaoler was a wonderfully indulgent man to those

under his custody. For the prisoners who were in his favour he betimes left the outside door open, so that they might go out and enjoy themselves for a few hours. His confidence was never abused, as there was honour even among prisoners. The parties thus favoured always came back before the time arrived for locking up finally for the night.

The secret of the cord for securing a continuous supply of whisky, and the saw for facilitating the escape of those who were sick of prison life, was confidentially communicated by the old stagers to the new arrivals in the old Dumbarton Tolbuith. The position of the residents in it might be termed, in spite of appearances, a free and easy one, but it was far too good to last for ever. That loose system of management has been supplanted by the more rigid and salutary one which is in full operation in the new "County Hotel" in Church Street.

During my relation's stay in the Tolbuith, and before he had finished his term of six months, the prison was condemned on account of its insecure state, and its inhabitants of the human species were taken to Glasgow prison, there to put in the remainder of their term. The vehicle in which they were removed was a covered carrier's caravan. The prisoners were manacled together by handcuffs in couples, and were guarded by a small detachment of soldiers on each side, who, with fixed bayonets, formed their escort from one prison to the other. There was not sufficient accommodation in the debtors' quarters for them when they arrived in Glasgow, so that a certain proportion of their number had to be accommodated in the criminal cells. The Glasgow Prison governor offered to supply the Dumbarton contingent with food at a certain fixed amount per man; but



as it was the criminal diet that he served them with, they rebelled against it, and wrote to the Magistrates regarding the matter. They ordered chafers to be provided for the use of the debtors who were confined in the criminal department, so as to enable them to cook their own food, and in the course of time, and by degrees, as circumstances permitted, they were drafted into the place allotted to parties in their position.

My readers may possibly wonder that when escape from the old Dumbarton Tolbuith was so very easy, the prisoners who were confined therein did not make off *en masse*. The reason that they did not do so was this. The smuggling party, who alone were the denizens of the goal at this time (if we except one woman from the country, who was confined on the charge of child murder), were all well-known and respectably-connected inhabitants of the surrounding district, who were in no way desirous of making their escape, to be hunted and most likely captured by the dogs of the law. They preferred possessing their souls in patience, and lying still until the time of their deliverance came round in the ordinary course. They then stepped out into society, and were not thought one hair the less of for their involuntary residence in Dumbarton; but, on the contrary, a general sympathy existed in their favour, as they were thought to be gallant lads.

Besides smuggling, poaching was a favourite pastime, if not occupation, of many of the early inhabitants of the burgh, who were by day weavers, shoemakers, maltsters, tailors, masons, joiners, blacksmiths, fishers, hirers of small-boats, &c., and were not unfrequently by night minions of the moon, armed with guns, scouring the hills and dales in quest of prey. The policies of Rosdhu were betimes visited by them and laid under contribution.

One rather notorious depredator was captured by one of the gamekeepers just as he had given the quietus to a partridge, and was forthwith taken before the Sir James Colquhoun of that day, who, like his forbears, dwelt amongst his own people, and the delinquent, being known to the worthy old baronet, he was admonished thus, "Noo, Archy, after this just let my patricks alane, an' I'll wink at a bit hare at an odd time, if ye're no ower greedy; you may go your ways noo, but min' the compact." The laird's "patricks" were from that time forthwith held sacred by Archy, who was ever after content with bagging an' occasional "maukin." The laird did not at all times wink at the killing of a hare. On one occasion one of his tenants was seen by him to fire at something in a field near to where he was walking, and he quickly made up to the farmer and asked him what he had been shooting; he said, "it was a craw." The laird replied, "We had better see gin it be a guid ane," and went to the spot, and picking up a hare held it up in the face of the culprit, saying, "My man, when your lease falls to be renewed, I'll hae a craw to pluck wi' ye ower the heid o' this job."

In the reign of the above baronet's successor, who was also a great game preserver, and of whom it was said that "he would as soon have ye kill ane o' his coos as ane o' his patricks," there dwelt in Helensburgh a tall, stout, harum-scarum, middle-aged fellow, who was a rare hand at the gun and rod, and was well posted up in all the modes, legal and illegal, of capturing bird, beast, or fish—in fact, he was a most famous or infamous poacher, whichever you like. He was, as a matter of course, beloved and looked up to by a certain portion of the community, and detested and looked down upon by another section, and ranked in

their estimation among the dangerous classes. There was one thing quite certain, that it was exceedingly dangerous for bird or beast to be within range of his unerring gun. In spite of his sporting propensities and love for having his foot upon his native heath in pursuit of unlawful pleasures, he was by no means a bad sort of biped. Sandy and other two associates, one a tinsmith and another a sportsman, belonging to Helensburgh, used not unfrequently to go together on poaching expeditions. On one of them they were accompanied by a cart, into which they put what fell to their guns. Each one of the party had a shooting license, with his name on it. There were several days spent on this sporting tour, which extended as far as Crianlarich, head of Glenfalloch. They were frequently challenged by gamekeepers and others *en route*, but their abundant supply of cheek and ready wit brought them out of all their difficulties unscathed, and they got home with a glorious haul of winged and ground game. A gentleman who had the shootings of Glenfalloch was one of those who challenged them, and during the colloquy which ensued, the man of tin, who was carrying the bag which contained part of the spoil, loitered near them; and Sandy, who ever had all his wits about him, saw that he must get his chum, the tinman, to move on, said "Get away, you low fellow, what are you playing the eavesdropper upon gentlemen for;" then the third member of the party at this stage produced his shooting license, which was seemingly in favour of a gentleman of high position on Lochlomond-side. The lessee of the shootings then expressed the hope that the party would excuse his interference. After an interview subsequently with one or two parties who were invested with "a little brief authority," where a sovereign tip had to

be resorted to, and the sportsmen reached home safely. On another occasion the same party went as far afield as the Inveraray district, where they had a couple of notable encounters with gamekeepers. One of these came on them who was not open to the charge of having his "loof creashed;" but insisted upon taking the delinquents to Inveraray, whom one of the party fired at and lodged a score of slugs or so in his posteriors, which did ultimately the recipient no great harm, but disabled him for the time being.

Another of the game guardians whom the party encountered was equally bent on doing his duty by apprehending and lodging in durance vile the poachers, and refusing the golden tip offered; him they incontinently stripped naked, tied his hands behind his back, fastened a hare across his chest and a girdle of grouse round his loins, and arrayed thus he had to travel home to his wife, a distance of four miles. Thus these free, unfettered, game-law despising souls revelled in their unlawful work.

A nephew of our hero Sandy, who is at present a tenant on the Luss estate, on one of the first occasions when he fired a gun, was eminently successful in his efforts. He had been asked to accompany a shooting party of gentlemen, and the number of grouse and ground game which fell to his gun outnumbered that which fell to all the rest combined. The late Sir James Colquhoun, while cracking with his father about the same, pawkily said, "It runs in the family. He takes after his uncle Sandy." In addition to many other brilliant qualifications, few or none could work a "sma' still" better or quieter than he could. He was none of those who believed in the generally accepted translation as being correct which goes on to say "render

unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's." His was a free and unfettered spirit which was a law unto itself. Like many others of that kidney, he frequently came to grief, and got free quarters in the "County Hotel" for varying periods, according to the supposed enormity or otherwise of his offences against law. Being a youngish man at the period of my story, my circle of acquaintances was larger than it was select, and amongst the rest I was acquainted with the hero of my tale. I met him one day in Helensburgh, and over something a little stronger than water, he told me the following story as to how he managed, while undergoing a term of imprisonment in Dumbarton Jail for poaching, to make free with old Governor Crawford's poultry :—

"During the first week or two of my confinement," said he, "I felt dull and lonely, and the time hung very heavy on my hands, but at the end of that period the cluck, cluck, clucking of the old governor's hens set all my old poaching propensities into active motion—in fact, the sound put new life into me—and I, like ane o' Shakespeare's characters, was 'myself again,' and was just itchin' to try my haun' on the hens. Says I to mysel,' says I, if ye can poach when ye are in limbo, my man, ye'll be naethin' short of a hero after a new fashion. Faith I'll try't, thinks I, and if I can enjoy in this joyless place the bread eaten in secret, which the Guid Book says is pleasant, only, instead of bread, roasted chuckies, the sweetness o' stolen waters'll be naethin' till't. The difficulties at first sight seemed to be no far short o' insurmountable, but I'm no easy frichted, and I never cared unco much for things that cam' to my haun ower easy. I wasna' very long in gettin' my plans a' in gran' workin' order. I had aye lots o' fish-hooks stowed awa' in oot o' the way places aboot my person. Weel, I

picked oot a strong ane, and fastened it firmly to a piece of strong twine, then baited it with a tempting morsel, waited for a favourable opportunity, and then threw it ower the window into the yaird, where the hens were innocently enjoying themselves. When I got a nibble I gied the line a guid sharp tug, and hooked chuckie securely. I then hauled it up into my cell, and hid it until I got a chance o' handin' it to a chum o' mine wha had access to a fire, for the purpose o' gettin' it cooked, as ye maun mind we were in as debtors—no being able to pay the fines imposed on us for poachin—so, as a matter o' course, we had mair liberty than the criminal squad. Weel, but to let you up to the style we cooked the prize in, it was this. We wrapped the fowl, feathers an' a, 'round wi' clay, and popped it into a good red fire; and in a twinkling it was cooked to a nicety—fit for the table o' His Grace o' Argyll, or my freen the Laird o' Rossthdu. Ye can easily see at a glance that nae ither mode o' cookery would hae suited oor purpose, as the feathers wad hae let the cat oot o' the bag, and spoiled the fun. After this sort o' thing had been going on cannily for some time, the Governor came into my cell ae day, an' says he to me—'Sandy, my good fellow' (ye maun mind that he and I were auld acquaintances; I had been under his careful guardianship many a time), 'Sandy,' says he, 'I would feel obliged if you would come down to the poultry yard and clip the wings of my fowls, for they must have got into, for me, a most unfortunate habit of flying over the walls, and the worst of it is that they never appear to fly back again; they must either stray or get stolen outside. There have been a large number gone so amissing within this few weeks, past. But with your aid, Sandy, my good fellow,' says he, 'we will stop that game.' I, nothing loth, gladly agreed to do

the job, and did it to the entire satisfaction o' my keeper, who rewarded me wi' a guid stiff caulker o' John Lang's best. I took my dinner off fowl noo an' again durin' the remainder o' my involuntary residence wi' the decent auld man, an' thocht it neither a sin nor a shame. But I'm a wee afeared that my conscience is what the ministers ca' a seared ane. At last my time was up, an' I got oot; an' it was twa or three days before I went hame to Helensburgh, and on ane o' thae days wha should I meet opposite auld William Risk's public-house, but my auld frenn the Governor. We shook hauns to show that there was nae ill will between us, then he asked me if I was dry; an' I says to him that I could be in a minute's notice, if there was likely to be onything gaun. He said, 'Sandy, Sandy, you are always thesame old sixpence yet.' To mak' a long story short in we goes an' had a gill; an' during the course o' the crack the auld cock says to me, 'Sandy, man, I've been much perplexed and terribly puzzled, ashow to account for the number of my fowls that went amissing during the time that you were in prison—the like never happened to me before. They must surely hâve gotten an inklin' that you, Sawney —, famous poacher that you are, was in dangerously close proximity to them, and then to save themselves from sudden death, took, early in the morning, wings unto themselves and flew, for anything I know to the contrary, to the ends of the earth. But maybe, Sandy, ye can help me to a better solution of the difficulty.' 'Deed can I, Mr Crawford,' says I, 'gin ye'll swear that nae use will be made o' the information to my hurt or detriment.' My terms were agreed to at once, an' I made a clean breast o' the hale affair; but at the same time I gied him to understan' that I michtna hae been sae honest wi' him were it no that I had made up my

mind to go out to Australia without delay, and therefore I wasna' the least likely to feast aft his hens ony mair. He took a hearty laugh at the trick, and said that I was a clever deevil; and that he had not the slightest doubt but that I would find myself quite at home among the Botany Bay folk."

Thus ended the tale of this lover of field sports. When the sederunt ended, we parted ne'er to meet again. Of his Australian experiences I know nothing; I believe, however, that he has gone from thence to "the happy hunting-grounds," where gamekeepers vex not, and the freedom-loving soul is neither "cribbed, cabined, or confined" within earthly bounds, mortal body, or cell of stone, but roams through the illimitable fields of air.

In 1812 the enterprising proprietor of the Baths Hotel, Henry Bell, placed his little pioneer steamer, "Comet," on the Clyde, and it being quickly followed by many others these gave quite an impetus to the growth of Helensburgh, which then extended from the Bath's Hotel on the east to Lady Augusta Clavering's and Samuel M'Kinlay's residences, situated respectively on the east and west side of the West Burn. Lady Augusta's house still stands, but Blythswood Terrace covers the site of the other, which was a wee "pub." The houses between these points were sparsely scattered and of a humble order, barring Provost Dixon's residence of Rockbank, and three or four others of a similarly good description on the south side of the Dumbarton road. In addition to these, there were in Maitland Street and Sinclair Street several two-storey houses, and also a few in Princes Street, including the three-storey one that the Post-Office is now in. In John Street there were a few cottages, and a two-storey house, the latter of which was built and owned



by a Mr M'Hutchen. Mr Brabender, the mason, built what was then considered a fine house at the corner of Campbell and Princes Streets, which is now the property of Mr Kidston of Ferniegair.

I should think that the number of houses in the burgh in all would be about 200, and the population about 800 ; but of course that is only a rough approximation. All around the infant burgh were fields more or less cultivated, a good deal of it being rather less than more so. The boys then for play had ample room and verge enough. The streets, barring the front one, could hardly be said to be formed. In wet weather, opposite what is now the Post Office, the road was almost impassable ; you had to cross it on stepping-stones, and at other points the same feat had to be performed if the pedestrian would avoid being " glaured " to the boot-top. What is now Colquhoun Square was a red sandstone quarry, unfenced ; in a water-filled hole of which a poor woman met her death by drowning.

When a boy at school, there was a large field between the road and the water at the East Bay, on which I have frequently played at the game of shinty. It has been entirely swept away by the encroaching sea. At the West Bay, on the west side of the West Burn, there was also a considerable extent of grassy ground, which was a favourite field for itinerant showmen, circus-men, and others of the same kidney camping on, to show forth their skill in their respective callings to the early Helensburghers. That not inconsiderable extent of ground has also been devoured by the insatiable sea, and is now part of the channelly shore.

While Helensburgh was in its infancy its municipal government was, as I have already indicated, patriarchal. The elders did not sit in the gate—there being no gate ;

but they might have been seen sitting on a log at the shore side, with scarlet nightcap-adorned head, and completely clad, minus the finishing touch of a coat. They preferred the ease and coolness of the shirt-sleeved state. As afore-mentioned, justice was often administered to offenders, in summary form, in a public-house kept by one of the bailies. The higher class of offences, consisting of refusal or neglect by members of the Corporation to attend the Parish Kirk, these were punished by fine and admonition; minor offences, consisting of pot-house squabbles (and these were in the ascendant) were, as a rule, punished by admonition only. One of the early bailies, when two or three noisy, drunken, fechtin' delinquents stood before him, had a set speech which he made to such, and it ran thus:—"My men, gin I send ye tae the Shirra this wull be a black job for ye, ane an' a'; but as I'm inclined tae temper justice wi' mercy, I'll gie ye anither opportunity o' reformin' your ways', an' I'll be content wi' admonishin' ye ance mair; an' I strongly recommend ye tae redd your quarrel up ower a gill, an' depart in peace an' sin no more, or a waur fate may befall ye." The recommendation was as a rule cheerfully complied with, but its wisdom may be doubted.

Of one of the old magistrates, who was a zealous sportsman, the story is told, that on one occasion a man was brought before him charged with the theft of a hare. Such an offence seemed, in the bailie's eye, an enormity deeper and darker than that of any petty larceny, and on the charge being read over, the man in authority immediately assumed his most dignified aspect, and exclaimed—"Steal a hare! the infernal scoundrel! No gentleman would steal a hare. Give him ten days' imprisonment."

Then as now the male and female tippler were betimes

sorely taxed in regard to how to gratify their propensities. The late parish schoolmaster, Mr. Lindsay, of happy memory, used to tell a story of a gudewife whose supplies of liquor through the grocer had been stopped by her husband, when she, up to snuff, resorted to the expedient of having John Barleycorn entered as snuff in the family pass-book. The husband, on examining the said book with a view to payment of the score, was astonished at the regular recurrence of the item, "One oz. snuff," and angrily demanded an explanation. "What does a' this snuff mean, Leezie?" "Snuff?" said she. "Aye, snuff!" quo' he. "Well, ye cankered carl, "what's an ounce o' snuff a day tae a woman wi' a strong drinkin' wean at her breist?"

The same authority excelled in recollections of odd sermons he had heard during the course of his long life. Of two in particular, fortunately, I can give a narrative. They run as follows:—A young probationer on an emergency supplying the parish minister's pulpit, chose as a text the command to Peter, "Feed my sheep," and telling his hearers that there was nothing like a proper division of a discourse into heads, divided his into three—1st, Feed; 2d, My; and 3d, Sheep. Another budding parson was even more droll in his arrangement, choosing as his text, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?" he said—"Let us consider this most interesting subject in the following aspects:—Firstly, The physical structure of sparrows; secondly, The nature of sparrows; thirdly, The uses of sparrows; and fourthly, The value of sparrows." Under each of these heads he thundered away at length to his hearers, and wound up with a solemn application of the subject.

Speaking of the administration of criminal, or the quasi-criminal law in Helensburgh in the times of old, it may be stated that it was not only peculiar, but that the machinery was simple in the extreme. The authorities possessed but one officer, old James Lennox, still hale and hearty, and acting as assistant harbour-master, was for a good many years the one, and he officiated as fiscal, constable, harbourmaster, burgh officer, and town crier, and had leisure over and above to pursue the primitive occupation of fisherman. The services of this man of multifarious duties being remunerated by the proceeds of a collecting box which circulated annually amongst the householders, his emoluments were somewhat scanty. By-and-bye an addition of one man was made to the officials of the town in the shape of a Highlander who had officiated for a year or two as ferryman at Rosneath, and he, elated with his rise in life, informed an acquaintance that "She couldna pe Campbell's ferry any more, as she was goin' to pe a polisher at Helensburgh." The same worthy, in apologising for some dereliction of duty to one of the bailies, said that "as sure's death she couldna help hersell, as some o' her freens frae Mull had come tae see hoo she lookit in her braw blue claes and kept her behint."

If the municipal government was constituted in a peculiar way, so was the old kirk session. The minister was, as a matter of course, "the tongue o' the trump;" but the elders betimes got to be opinionative and stubborn, and expressed their views in language more distinguished for plainness than politeness. One of these worthies who had long taken an active part in the business of the session, insisted on their being provided with a library, consisting of all the Acts of Parliament since the Union; for, as he

characteristically remarked, "Hoo could they administer the law without knowing what it was? an' hoo could they know it without the aid o' thae buiks?" The same sapient elder, on being asked by the minister how the congregation had liked the pulpit supply which he had provided during his absence on a month's holidays, replied, "O verra well, when ye gang awa' ye never send us ony buddy waur than yersel."

About fifty or sixty years ago Helensburgh<sup>2</sup> was called pretty generally by the ugly, suggestive, and unhappy name of "Sodom." It may be set down as an established fact, that it was not on account of the piety of its inhabitants that the name was conferred upon it. One of the little cluster of houses at Neddy's Point was then also known as "Lot's House," in which a very worthy man, a shoemaker, lived and laboured, and he having fled from Helensburgh and set up his tent there, was termed "Lot," and his house was called by his name.

The original charter of the burgh, as we have before noticed incidentally, provided for two annual fairs. These were kept up for a good few years, and a fair stroke of business, in the way of selling cattle and feeing servants, was done at them. These were also occasions of festivity to the early natives. Travelling showmen, with their human monstrosities and other attractions, jugglers, acrobats, minstrels, tight-rope dancers, and others of like kidney, conjoined with gingerbread dealers and candymen, supplied the brief saturnalia. A score of years have fled since there was the smallest vestige of the old fairs. A thriving annual cattle show now, in some measure, fills the blank caused in the agricultural mind by the extinguishment of the old markets.



GLASGOW & GARELOCH-HEAD STEAMER "HELENSBURGH," 81 TONS, (BUILT BY WM. DENNY, DUMBARTON, IN 1825),  
Passing Dumbarton Castle, from a sketch taken half a century ago.



In the olden time the customer weaver, the itinerant tailor, and travelling shoemaker used to perambulate the country, the first for the purpose of securing orders, and the others for work, either to be executed on the spot or elsewhere, according to arrangement. Now these have passed away, leaving no successors, and with them have gone many pleasant associations of gossip retailed by the winter fire, and of queer stories told and old songs sung by these genial sons of toil in the auld clay biggins of their employers. These "whippers of the cat," &c., were to that age what newspapers, historians, and minstrels are to the present one.

Previous to the introduction of steam navigation, the distance across the firth to Greenock was reckoned seven miles. The old wherry-men never computed it at an inch less to any passenger. Now it is reduced by a couple of miles since boats began to be propelled by steam.

I am not able to give the names of the early Helensburgh steamers in the order of their appearance; but in 1834 there were the following on the Glasgow and Garelochhead run:— "Helensburgh," of gross tonnage 125<sup>10</sup>/<sub>64</sub>, which plied 10 years. She had one side lever engine of 52-horse power by Robert Napier of Camlachie, latterly of Lancefield, the Vulcan Foundry, and Govan. This was the first single-engined steamer, which had two eccentric rods, one for going ahead and one for going astern. She was also the first steamer on the Clyde which had an iron mast, that was utilized as a chimney to the fore cabin. She was sold to Liverpool owners in 1835, who ran her between that port and Woodside until she was broken up at Birkenhead in 1845, after an honourable service of twenty years. The other steamers on the station between



Glasgow and Garelochhead at the time I write of were the "Clarence," "Caledonia," "Greenock," "James Oswald," "Sultan," and "Waverley."

My brother, Captain Macleod, and several of the other commanders of the fleet were desperately addicted to racing their boats against those of their rivals. One of the number has been known, in the ardour of his feelings, to stand upon the weights on the top of the steam valve so as to increase the pressure, and so press on his craft at a more rapid rate—thus eclipsing the Yankee skipper who, under similar circumstances, utilized a nigger for the purpose. Each boat had its admirers who upheld its reputation as if it had been an article in the creed of their faith. The boats of the "Helensburgh Steamboat Company," formed after the trade had been somewhat developed, were transferred into the hands of Messrs. Henderson & M'Kellar, who for many years possessed almost a monopoly of the Helensburgh trade, and whose green boats were quite a feature in the river traffic. They rejoiced in high sounding names—such as "Monarch," "Emperor," "Prince," or such like, and were distinguished in their day for swiftness and comfort. Now the coast knoweth them no more. Both the boats, save one, and their owners have stranded and been broken up. So endeth all sublunary things.

While touching on steamboats, the blowing up of the high-pressure steamer "Telegraph" at the quay of Helensburgh on the 21st March, 1844, at noon, while she was in the act of starting therefrom, may be worth narrating. On that day, and at that hour, I was standing in Clyde Street and was startled by a report as if a big gun had been discharged. On looking quaywards, from whence the sound came, I was alarmed and horrified to find

that the steamer had blown up. Hurrying along the slip-quay, the tide being lowish, the first sad sight that met my gaze was the dead body of Mr Hedderwick, which had been blown over the quay and fell on its east side on to the shore. Willing hands in considerable numbers had by this time come upon the scene, and the removal of the dead, dying, and wounded was speedily accomplished. The mid section of the vessel was blown to pieces down to the water's edge, and its machinery was discharged as if from a cannon's mouth, far up on the beach.

On boarding the vessel forward, I found the body of poor Bob M'Auslan, a pilot, whom I knew well. He often spoke to me about the blowing-up of the vessel as being a possibility he dreaded, and yet for all that he stuck to her and met the fate which his fears prognosticated. The sights that met our gaze, and the groanings which filled our ears, were very harrowing to the feelings. As far as I recollect there were 18 persons killed by the explosion, and their bodies were removed to the Tontine Hotel Hall for identification. There were a good many scalded and wounded, and these were carefully attended to according to the necessities of their respective cases, either at Helensburgh or in the Infirmary of Greenock.

The catastrophe was due entirely to gross carelessness in allowing the water to get too low in the boiler, and then while the plates thereof were red hot, pumping in cold water to the fiery receptacle, by which means steam was generated too rapidly, and the vessel was broken up like matchwood, and death and destruction let loose to play the sad havoc of which we saw such abundant evidences all around. The following poem was written on this sore event, or a similar one, by our townsman Dr Hedderwick, of the *Citizen* :—

## ON THE EXPLOSION OF A STEAMER.

“ Gaily the sun was shining ;  
Heaven and earth,  
As if combining  
In the magic birth  
Of beauty, glowed  
With brilliance all their own ;  
And tints which owed  
Their breathing loveliness to Him alone,  
Whose footstool is the earth, and heaven his peerless throne.

“ One gorgeous panorama  
Nature spread,  
For the great drama  
In which mortals tread  
Life’s mighty stage ;  
Where honesty and fraud  
Dire warfare wage ;  
With God and legion’d seraphim to laud,  
Or condemnation deal where demons would applaud,

“ The scene was clothed in beauty,  
And the rills,  
Joyous in duty,  
Bounded from the hills  
To the calm deep,  
Which seemed to lie at rest,  
As if in sleep ;  
Like a fond mother in her offspring blest,  
With all her baby-clouds reposing in her breast.

“ And gladness reigned unmingled ;  
Far and near  
Sweet music tingled  
On the list’ning ear :  
And thrilling joys—  
The brook’s melodious purl,  
The laugh of boys,  
And the rich giggle of the rose-lipped girl,  
All round the welkin rang in one delightful whirl !

“ When lo! upon the ocean  
There appear'd,  
Darting with bird-like motion  
As it near'd  
The busy shore,  
A vessel arm'd with might  
To wander o'er  
The trackless billows, in the wind's despite—  
Bold as the lion's range ; free as the eagle's flight !

“ Within were happy faces—  
Forms so fair,  
That all the graces  
Seem'd encircled there ;  
Eyes bright and blue,  
And hands so far above  
The lily's hue,  
That many a youth, romantic in his love,  
Had whisper'd Romeo's prayer, and wished he were a glove.

“ There was the aged mother,  
There the sire,  
Sister and brother,  
And the laughing choir  
Of children young ;  
And lovely as the morn  
When the birds sung  
In Paradise, ere sin and death were born,  
Or wilful man had err'd where God had deigned to warn.

“ Onward the vessel panted,  
Proudly brave ;  
No wind it wanted,  
And it feared no wave ;  
While her rich freight,  
On pleasure idly bound,  
Appear'd elate  
With joy their bosoms had already found,  
And all was bright above, and happy all around !

“ But that which bore them flying  
Thus along,  
Perdue was lying,  
And at once upsprung,  
With fiery breath,  
Shouting on every side  
The call of death !

And lives were scatter'd to the stifling tide,  
And weeping friends bereaved, religion's power defied !

“ Then where all erst was gladness,  
There were seen  
Despair's fierce madness,  
And the tragic queen  
Of common life  
Steep'd in a sea of woe ;  
Husband and wife,

Brother and friend, lover and loved laid low ;  
Yet nature bask'd the while in summer's richest glow !

“ And while the sun was gilding  
Sea and hill,  
In yonder building,  
Baffling human skill,  
The sufferers lay  
In ecstasies of pain  
The livelong day,

Where fell disease, with all her squalid train,  
Views the pale victims writhe beneath her clankless chain .

“ But now, alas, 'tis over !  
The dark pall  
Conceals the lover  
And the loved of all !  
The mountain slopes,  
Are robed in brightest green,  
And rising hopes

Diffuse a sacred beauty o'er the scene ;  
Though dim the mourner's eye, his thoughts are all serene.”



Mechanical Photo.

Sturrt, Harlow

*S. Waddell*



In 1843 the Helensburgh Gas Light Company was formed, and in 1844 gas was first served to the burgh. In that year to David Waddell, Esq., was delegated the honourable position of opening the valves which set the new illuminant free to do its kindly work. This honour was conferred upon that gentleman for the great interest which he had taken in the undertaking, of which he was then, as he is still, a leading Director. Mr Waddell, in addition to being one of the early apostles of light in the burgh, was also one of leading, for he was to a large degree instrumental in the erection of the Helensburgh Parish Church, of which he was one of the original trustees ; and further, I claim for him the honour of an improver of the ways of the people, and a sweetener of the breath of the town, for during the years he sat with so much acceptance in the Town Council, he had, to a large extent, laid upon his shoulders the onus of seeing that the new streets and new drains of the burgh were properly formed ; and any one who knows Mr Waddell must be aware that the work done by him, would be in a high degree painstaking, conscientious, and intelligent, redounding greatly to the public benefit.

In 1846 a Police Act was obtained, under the provisions of which the town's affairs were regulated down to 1875, at which date the local Act was set aside by the adoption of the General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, under which our authorities are invested with greater powers for the due and proper governance of the burgh, which they have used to some good purpose.

The fourth enactment of the 1846 Act ran as follows :—  
“And be it enacted, that Richard Kidston, present Provost ; Peter Walker, and Alexander Macleod, present Bailies ; Archibald Paterson, Duncan M'Farlane, David



Waddell, and James Henderson, present Councillors; or such other individuals as may be in office, in virtue of said Royal Charter, shall be the first Provost, Bailies, and Councillors of said Burgh of Barony of Helensburgh, under this Act, and shall continue in their respective offices, aye and until an election of Councillors has been completed in virtue of the provisions of this Act."

Having just been favoured with a perusal of "Fowler's Helensburgh Directory for 1834-5," I find the population of the burgh, as given therein, was at that time about 1200, and if suburbs were included, probably 1406. The qualified voters for the county are set down as—within burgh, 69; in the suburbs, 24. The municipal constituency consisted of 56, these being all the inhabitants (male) having right to a house and garden-ground within the burgh by feu or lease of 100 years, and as such entitled to choose annually, on the 11th day of September, at eleven o'clock forenoon, out of their number, Magistrates and Town Council. The householders' names in the burgh at that period numbered 217, as given in the directory. About a dozen more figured therein belonging to the neighbourhood. The names, addresses, and number of apartments and beds belonging to parties who were open for a consideration to take in lodgers and do for them, are given in full in this useful book. There were 126 of such offering accommodation, ranging from one apartment up to 14. We give as a curiosity an analyses of the list, running consecutively from 1 to 14 rooms—12, 11, 7, 17, 35, 12, 5, 7, 6, 6, 3, 3, 1, 1. The number of beds in each house, as a rule, was one less than that of the apartments; but in some cases they equalled, and in other instances exceeded, the same in numbers. Four rooms and kitchen houses seem to have been very much in

the ascendant in the burgh about half a century ago. He that runneth may read from that fact the enormous strides in wealth and luxuriousness of living which have taken place since that not very remote period. I presume that the popular size now (1883) of houses for summer visitors must at least have double the accommodation which was thought to be ample for the wants of parties in a similar position of life fifty years ago.

During the early years of the burgh the harbour accommodation was deplorably bad. The Imperial Government of that period got £1500 voted to make a suitable provision for the traffic, upon the condition that an equal sum was raised voluntarily, but as that amount was not reached by £400 the matter fell through. There certainly was built and managed by a committee of subscribers, a rude slip stone quay of the most primitive description, with an arm striking off from it to the east at a right angle, the whole contrivance being a frail ruckle o' stanes. The arm did not stand long, a storm came on one day and knocked it into everlasting smash. The Town Council in 1834 obtained the control of the quay, and from time to time improved the same, until, in 1870, they, as Harbour Trustees, produced the present noble pier and adjuncts, worth per annum, at the Craigendoran era, £1500, but now, alas! only worth £550. Since the advent of the railway there has been no clamant need for a harbour, the pier being sufficient for all purposes.

Nine years after the "Telegraph" catastrophe, another steamer, the "Emperor," an old Helensburgh boat, created a considerable sensation in the West of Scotland in general, but in Helensburgh and Garelochside in particular, the feeling evoked was extraordinarily strong, and that

state of matters was brought about by the Sunday sailing of the craft alluded to, and in 1853 Garelochhead became the scene of a rather ludicrous conflict between Sabbatarians and anti-Sabbatarians, celebrated in song and story as the "Battle of Garelochhead Pier," and it arose in this wise:—The beautiful watering-places of the Clyde and its adjacent lochs, which form such an oasis in the desert of life to the thousands of the tired, jaded children of the city of the more opulent classes, were then tabooed to the working classes on account of their prolonged hours of labour on Saturdays as on the other working days of the week. Week in, week out, they had to hew their darg of wood, and draw their darg of water, and toil and moil, and bear the weary load of this world's burden amid the din, smoke, and many depressing influences and sore temptations of a great city—the blessed Sunday, and the annual Fast, Fair, and New-Year holidays onlyexcepted—these immured ones crying out in their agony, Who will deliver us from the crushing weight of this great incubus of a city that is by degrees stifling all that is beautiful in our aspirations, and lead us out into the beautiful world that lieth outside the city walls.

Under these circumstances several parties, seeing possibly their own pecuniary advantage therein, started a steamer, which plied on Sundays between Glasgow and various watering-places and ports on the Clyde, and amongst other places Garelochhead was visited. During one of its trips thereto, on a quiet autumnal Sunday, the late Sir James Colquhoun of Luss, a devout, rigid Sabbatarian, having the courage of his opinions, caused the pier to be barricaded and defended by his gillies and retainers, who threatened with violence any of the steamer's passengers who should

attempt a landing *via* the pier. A few bold spirits, nothing daunted by the threatening aspect of affairs, stepped defiantly forth on the forbidden landing place, and those were incontinently collared by the gillies. This was the prelude to a general engagement, which began by the attacking party firing off from their entrenched position on board of the steamer a brisk discharge of lemonade bottles, potatoes, coals, and other miscellaneous missiles upon the devoted heads of the defenders of the pier, under cover of which fire, a reserve force, armed with stout cudgels, made good a footing thereon, and put the Colquhoun forces to the rout. In this short and sharp engagement, fortunately, there were no lives lost nor bones broken.

The victory being won by the sons of St. Mungo, the gates of the pier were thrown open, and club law for the nonce decided the question at issue. The Court of Session, however, before which the matter was ultimately taken, decided in favour of Sir James's right to shut his private pier in the face of Sunday travellers, and now the "Sunday breaker" vexeth no more by her presence there on the Lord's Day the righteous souls of the Garelochheadians.

In writing about means of transit, it might be as well to state that a good many years ago a coach ran thrice a-week between Helensburgh and Luss; but, from want of encouragement or some other cause or causes to me unknown, it was withdrawn; but within the last four or five years our enterprising townsman, Mr Snodgrass, has started a most comfortable open conveyance, got up on the tourist Highland coach principle, which he runs in the summer months round the three lochs—viz., Lochlomond, Lochlong, and Gareloch, thereby improving upon the limited service alluded to above.

On May 31, 1858, Helensburgh was put in connection with the great railway system of the country by means of a branch from the Dalreoch Station of the Dumbartonshire Railway. For a few years before that period communication was kept up between these places by means of an omnibus which ran morning and evening. From this advent of the iron horse our good town has at least tripled in size, and been vastly improved in many ways.

In March, 1868, during the Provostship of Mr Breingan, an abundant supply of water, of unimpeachable quality, was introduced to the town, in connection with which he received a present of a silver claret jug. His good lady most graciously and gracefully performed the operation of turning on the supply to the burgh. There was an imposing procession over the head of the affair, and banners, music, speeches, and drink galore, the whole town being *en fete*. Four years after this the Mains Hill supply was supplemented by the addition thereto of water drawn from the Ballyvoolin Burn, Glenfruin, after a Parliamentary contest with the Vale of Leven Turkey-red dyeing and printwork owners.

The carrying out of this undertaking was beset by no small difficulties. Powers had first to be obtained from Parliament before it could be begun; and to that application the majority of the ratepayers had to be consenting parties. In regard to the matter there was a very great diversity of opinion in the burgh, and feeling ran high. There were three opposing parties to the scheme, which was approved of by the Council. One wanted no water other than what they already had; another did not approve of the proposed source of supply; and a third held that the water ought to be brought in under a local act and

not under the powers contained in the water clauses of the General Police (Scotland) Act, as proposed by the authorities.

On the 31st of August, 1866, a poll was taken on the adoption or rejection of the water clauses of the Police Bill, and at its close it was found that, by a small majority, the water clauses were adopted. This happy result was brought about, in a great measure, by the enthusiastic action of Provost Breingan, who grudged no labour, however arduous, so that his patriotic purpose might be crowned with success.

In the winter of 1868-69, after the lapse of many years, great shoals of herrings penetrated the Firth of Clyde as high up as Dunlop Castle and the quay of Dumbarton. The Gareloch was alive with them. As a matter of course the rumour soon spread that such was the case, and a large fleet of fishing-boats quickly put in an appearance at our harbour, fully manned, prepared to reap the harvest of the sea. In addition to local boats there were a large number came through the Forth and Clyde Canal from the East Coast. There were a number of these hailed from Coldingham Shore on the Berwickshire Coast, near St Abb's Head, manned by the Wilsons, with whom I am connected; and these steady toilers of the sea went at their work with a will, and when their labour was over, they left not empty-handed. So great were the hauls that, in more than one instance, boats actually sank under the burden. On one occasion one of my friends, Captain Peter Wilson, of the notable boat "Ann," having been successful in one of his midnight adventures in filling his craft to overflowing with bonnie caller herring, what ill luck should befall him, but that when making for Helensburgh his craft grounded, and

as it was stormy, and an ebb tide, he was constrained to consign his glittering treasures once more to the briney, in such numbers as to enable the vessel to float off and proceed on her voyage. There were large numbers of herring buyers in Helensburgh from all parts, who without delay despatched the fish by water and rail to market. During the heat of the operations special trains were run, and the town was unwontedly busy. Year by year since the years alluded to herring have come to the Gareloch, but not in sufficient numbers to make the fishing of them remunerative.

The year 1877 was a memorable one in the annals of Helensburgh, for in that year the town became possessed of one of the most delightful public parks in Britain's isle. It is wee but wonderous bonnie. At all seasons it is enjoyable, but an autumn sunset, as seen from it when the "Lord of Day" has sunk behind the grand serrated purple hills of Argyll, and suffused as a parting blessing the landscape with hues of regal crimson, purple, and gold, is a feast for the gods, a thing to be remembered ever, a pure delight which ought to call forth thankfulness to Almighty God for such a manifestation of His glory. What is the most glorious of earth's pageantries as compared with such a sight? A mere thing of shreds and patches, an empty nothing and vanity. Hundreds of times I have passed hours in the contemplation of such sunset scenes, and my appetite has grown with what it fed upon.

How the burgh became the happy possessor of Cairndhu Park came about in this wise. A local artist of world-wide fame had set his heart upon securing the place as a site for a villa and the bruit thereof, having reached the ears of our worthy and patriotic townsman, Mr William Kidston of Ferniegair (a true friend of Helensburgh and its people),

he without delay entered into negotiations with the Duke of Argyll for the purchase of the same, with a view to its being handed over to the public as a park. Fortunately, he was successful in securing the prize. It was laid out in walks, and provided with elegant and comfortable seats and a handsome drinking fountain for visitors, and also a picturesque band stand, and was formally opened on the 11th day of August, 1877. Helensburgh on that day held high holiday in honour of the occasion, and many of its inhabitants formed in procession in Colquhoun Square and marched, preceded by the volunteer force and a band of music, to Cairndhu, where Sir James and Lady Colquhoun, Mr William Colquhoun, the Lord Lieutenant of the County, the Sheriff of the County, the clergymen of the district, Mr Wm. Kidston, and the Provost and municipal authorities of the burgh, with a large concourse of ladies and gentlemen awaited their arrival.

Addresses were delivered on the ground by Sir James Colquhoun, the Lord Lieutenant, Messrs. Kidston, Colquhoun, Ure, Cramb, M'Culloch, and other leading magnates, and these preliminaries over, amid much jubilation, music, and waving of banners and handkerchiefs, the Park was declared open to the public from henceforth and for ever.

The cost of acquiring and laying out the ground was about £2000, which had been voluntarily contributed by members of the Colquhoun family, Mr William Kidston, the Provost of Helensburgh Mr. Steven, and others.

Although artificialised and licked into a smoother contour than it showed of yore, and bearing a new name, yet we hope that the old familiar title of "Neddy's Point" will cling to it for generations yet to come, even although the



somewhat narrow boundaries of the Park should be enlarged by several acres.

Were this sweet little gem of a park supplemented by a field on the north side of the highway being added thereto, then Helensburgh could boast, were she boastful, of having not only one of the most exquisitely beautiful public pleasure grounds in Scotland, but one which for dimensions would compare favourably with any such connected with towns of a similar size.

The piece of ground alluded to as suitable for embracement is dominated by Ardencape Castle, and is about ten Scotch acres in extent. From its lying immediately in front of the castle it is not at all likely that it would be feued for house-building purposes, so that it is exceedingly likely that the Colquhoun family might feel disposed to dispose of it to the town on easy terms, seeing that it was for a public good, and might be a means of drawing parties to reside in Helensburgh, and possibly feu ground for building purposes.

It has been affirmed that a gentleman who resides in the neighbourhood of the Park had offered a subscription of £500 towards a fund for enabling the authorities to purchase the ground, surely that amount could be supplemented in such a substantial manner as would enable "the powers that be" to go in and possess the land?

Now follows a most notable occurrence, in which our good town, albeit of yesterday, figured *de facto* as the leading town in the county, putting our ancient neighbour Dumbarton, although dating from Noah, into the shade. Its accommodation for travellers being considered of the same era by the Lords of Session, they fixed in their wisdom on our burgh for trying the

DUMBARTONSHIRE ELECTION PETITION,

so as to ensure a' the comforts o' Auld Reekie. As it happened that the proof copy of the *Helensburgh and Gareloch Times* newspaper, of date June 9th, 1880, contains a full report of the interesting, though somewhat disappointing proceedings, I will give its report *in extenso*, as it will be more minute in details than the one that I could give from memory, and my desire is to serve up to my readers the very finest of the wheat, whether home grown or imported.

“As our readers are already tolerably familiar with the nature of this case, it is unnecessary to do more than recapitulate in the shortest terms the substance of it. Mr John William Burns of Kilmahew, was candidate for the County in the Liberal interest. His opponent, Mr Archibald Orr-Ewing, the Conservative candidate, won the day by a small majority. Mr Burns, believing that the seat had been secured by unfair means, presented a petition to the Court of Session against the return of his opponent, on the ground of bribery, treating, and personation, and claiming the seat for himself. A counter statement was made by Mr Ewing that Mr Burns, his agents, or committee, had been guilty of like offences. The petition fell to be tried by Lords Ormisdale, and Craighill, and it was arranged some time ago that the trial should take place in Helensburgh. Arrangements were accordingly made, through the Sheriff of the County, for the use of the Court House and adjoining apartments for the trial which commenced yesterday. The Court-Room was refitted by Messrs Wylie and Lochhead, of Glasgow, and such arrangements made for the convenience and comfort of the judges, counsel, and witnesses, as the limited accomodation would admit of. The Chief Constable of the

County also made such arrangements for the attendance of a sufficient staff of constables to secure order and prevent any breach of the peace. On Monday afternoon their Lordships arrived in Helensburgh, and were met by the Provost, Magistrates, and Clerk, and escorted to the Queen's Hotel, where they were to lodge during the trial. A large gathering of people from Glasgow and elsewhere assembled in Helensburgh. The hotels were full, and many private lodgings had been secured. But as the Court-Room is very small, it was impossible that a great many of those who wished to be present during the trial could either secure seats or have any opportunity of being present.

"On Tuesday morning, June 8th, 1880, the judges left the hotel about ten o'clock, and proceeded to the Town's Buildings under an escort of police. A large concourse of spectators lined the way, curious to see the representatives of the majesty of the law. About ten o'clock the members of the press and a few agents, witnesses, and spectators took their seats in the Court House and waited. After sitting some time, and no appearance being made by either judges or counsel, it became apparent that something was in the wind, and it was whispered about that the case was to be withdrawn. Accordingly, when the judges and counsel entered about 11 A.M., the audience was half prepared for what followed.

"The presiding judges on the occasion were Lords Ormisdale and Craighill. Mr J. P. B. Robertson, Mr D. M'Kechnie, and Mr S. Dickson, advocates, appeared for Mr Orr-Ewing, M.P., and the agents were Mr John J. Coats, writer, Glasgow; Mr Cluny M'Pherson, writer, Glasgow; Mr James Spalding, writer, Helensburgh; and Mr Wm. Craig, writer, Dumbarton. The advocates for Mr J. W.

Burns were Mr J. B. Balfour (Solicitor General), Mr Ure, and Mr M'Intosh; the agents were Mr James M'Kenzie, Glasgow, Mr John S. Wright, Glasgow; Mr James M'Donald, Glasgow, and Mr J. T. T. Brown, Glasgow.

"Large crowds assembled outside, and the small hall was crowded. Among the more prominent gentlemen in the Court were Mr H. E. Crum-Ewing (Lord-Lieutenant of the county) in his official uniform, Mr William Kidston of Ferniegair, Colonel Colquhoun of Arroquhar, Sheriff Gloag, Provost Stuart, and Bailies Bryson and Campbell.

"Mr Orr-Ewing and Mr Burns were both in the Court. The first proceeding was the administration of the oath to the shorthand writer.

"Mr BALFOUR said the whole information, including the documents recovered under the specification, had now been carefully considered by my learned friends and myself, and that while we believe that we would be in a position to establish certain irregularities on the part of some persons promoting the candidature of Mr Orr-Ewing, we do not feel that we could establish that the candidature was corrupt, and in these circumstances it did not appear to be our duty to proceed further with the enquiry. Your lordships will at once see the great difference between corrupt candidature and irregularities on the part of those connected with it; and I do not feel, upon the scrutiny, we could hope to strike off a sufficient number of votes to give Mr Burns the seat if Mr Orr-Ewing was unseated.

"Mr ROBERTSON said the Solicitor-General this morning informed me of the course the petitioner intended to take. I have therefore thought it my duty to consider the position of the respondent with reference to the recriminatory case. The respondent thinks it fair to say that the information as

"Lord ORMIDALE—I see it. It is quite clear. (Laughter.)

"Mr BALFOUR thought that probably the best course would be to write an interlocutor, that in respect of the statement now made, and if his Lordship took it as a withdrawal—of their intention to withdraw—and adjourn for so many days in order that the petitioner might have an opportunity for withdrawal.

"His LORDSHIP agreed with this, and said—I am exceedingly happy indeed on account of both parties, with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted, that there is an end to this case.

"After his Lordship had intimated formally that the matter was adjourned until this day week in Edinburgh,

"Mr WALLACE, Solsgirth, rose among the audience, and addressing the bench said—I am a witness here. Is it understood that the witnesses are to appear in Edinburgh, or will they be——("No, no," and laughter.)

"Lord ORMIDALE—You are not Mr Brown, from whom I had a medical certificate. (Laughter.)

"The court then rose.

"When the result of the court was announced among the crowd outside, it was received with cheers."

Thus ended this miserable business, which ought never to have been begun. Our burly, good-hearted, open-handed, enterprising, prosperous friend, Archibald Orr Ewing of Ballikinrain, Esq., retaining with honour the seat he had won so hardly, the duties appertaining to which he in the past had discharged so creditably to himself and advantageously to the county.

As a polite acknowledgment of the excellent arrangements made by the local authorities in connection with the investigation, my lords had graciously invited Provost Stuart,

and Bailies Bryson and Campbell to dine with them at the 'Queen's,' at seven o'clock in the evening. Lord Ormidale, in the Court House, said to the magistrates good-humouredly before he departed therefrom:—"Recollect, gentlemen, that although the case has broken down, yet the invitation to dinner holds good, and we expect to have the pleasure of your company to-night." Considering where the dinner came off, it is hardly necessary to say that it was a most sumptuous entertainment.

Before the last word in this chapter of the book is said, I think it right to give a brief narrative of the *Municipal Election of November, 1882*, as it was an eventful one, changing as it did the complexion of the Council from two-thirds blue to an equal blending of that colour and red.

For a good many years back there had been a great amount of apathy displayed by the community in regard to the election of Councillors. In some years it was difficult to get the vacancies in the Council filled.

Under these circumstances it so happened that the Conservative party by degrees became the strongest at the Council Board. The Liberal party for years were not disturbed apparently at the spectacle. But this year a change came o'er the spirit of their dream, and they resolved that they should and would put forth their best efforts to return men of their own political stamp to the Council, so that ultimately the Radical burgh might have a Radical Council. With that end in view they set all the requisite machinery in motion to grind out the desiderated results.

Immediately before the election there was an evening meeting of the electors in the Mission Hall, King Street, under the presidency of Provost Stuart, for the nomination of candidates, and the hearing of such retiring Councillors

as choose to give an account of their stewardship, The Provost, Councillor Walker, Bailie Muir, and a few others addressed the assemblage, and Bailie Muir, and Councillor Robert Walker were duly nominated for the filling up of two of the vacancies. Bailie Muir gave a most statesmanlike *resume* of the work that the Council had been engaged in for the past year, and forecasted the measures which, in his estimation, were still necessary to be put in operation for the weal of the burgh. In his remarks he shewed the large saving which in recent years had been effected in management expenses, and also the great amount of arrears of rates which had been recovered within the same period. Altogether he made such a capital appearance, and got such a respectful hearing, that his calling having been made at the meeting, I thought that his election was sure at the poll, but more of that anon. After the customary votes of thanks had been passed, the large, and upon the whole orderly, meeting dispersed.

On the morning of the election it was abundantly evident that the burgh was moved to its centre, and that the internal inflammation had burst out to the surface in the shape of placards of various hues, in various interests, and in various degrees of taste.

The leading men, or politicians, on both sides bestirred themselves mightily, for it was a party fight, pure and simple, that was being waged. From the dawn of day until the close of the poll nothing damped their ardour, not even the copious downpour of rain which fell so persistently upon that occasion.

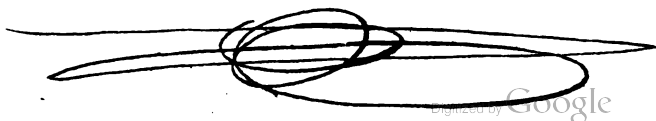
An anxious time was experienced throughout the day by those engaged in the conflict, but more especially was this the case during the time that the votes were being counted.



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow

Robert Bellini.







At eight P.M. the result of the voting was made known by Provost Stuart, from one of the windows of the Municipal Buildings, to the large crowd which had collected in Princes Street, the following gentlemen being declared duly elected Councillors of the burgh (not one of the number was a Conservative, a clean sweep having been made of such candidates, in the party struggle, whatever his worth), viz :—ex-Provost Breingan, and Messrs M'Callum, Houston, and Logan.

The defeated parties were ex-Bailie Muir, Councillor Robert Walker, and Mr Campbell, druggist.

The Council, as now constituted, consists of the following members, viz.:—John Stuart, Esq., Provost; William Bryson and Donald M'Callum, Esqrs., Bailies; and Councillors John Dingwall, J. W. McCulloch, William Tait, George Harvie, David Miller, William Greenlees, Alexander Breingan, Adam Houston, and William Logan; George MacLachlan, Clerk; Edward Butt, Treasurer.

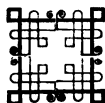
While it must be admitted that the public have returned men quite capable of conducting the town's affairs very creditably, yet it is to be in some measure deplored that the selection of such should have been made from the narrow basis of party, and not from the broad platform of ability, irrespective of political creed. There appears to me to be far too much bitterness in town in regard to political matters. It would tend much to sweeten the breath of society if both parties would mix discretion with their zeal, and agree to differ and differ to agree, each giving the other in things political the credit of cherishing and upholding opinions in all honesty and uprightness of heart.

It is a matter of very general regret now that the heat of battle is over that Bailie Muir was ousted, for he was a potential magistrate of the right stamp. "Worthiness was

glad before him, and worthlessness afraid." He had made the care of the streets and drains of the burgh a speciality of his, and under his management they were fast approaching perfection when he "was removed." The public will be glad of him yet.

His chief claim on the regard of the people of Helensburgh lay in his uncompromising opposition in the Police Commission, at the time of the adoption of the Roads and Bridges Act, to the voting of any subsidy from the Burgh Rates towards the maintenance of the county roads outside the burgh boundary, when it was proposed to enter into a provisional agreement with the county authorities, by which an annual payment of at least £100 per annum for all time coming was saved to the community.

A good deal of additional matter in connection with the burgh's history will be found incidentally noticed in several of the subsequent chapters, but more especially is that the case in the one devoted to biographical sketches of the Provosts of the town.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### PRESENTATIONS TO NOTABLE TOWNSMEN.

THE Helensburgh people are a testimonialising race, delighting in giving gifts to their men of mark. In 1851 Provost Walker of Rockbank got a valuable oil painting of the town of Helensburgh presented to him "for his valuable services to the burgh;" Provost Drysdale, in 1864, got a costly presentation at a banquet got up in his honour—Sir James Colquhoun, Bart., presiding; Provost Alexander Breingan had also the honour, in 1870, of receiving substantial tokens of the esteem in which he is held by the people whom he governed so wisely, notices of which appear under the heading of "Provosts of the Burgh."

#### COUNCILLOR DONALD MURRAY.

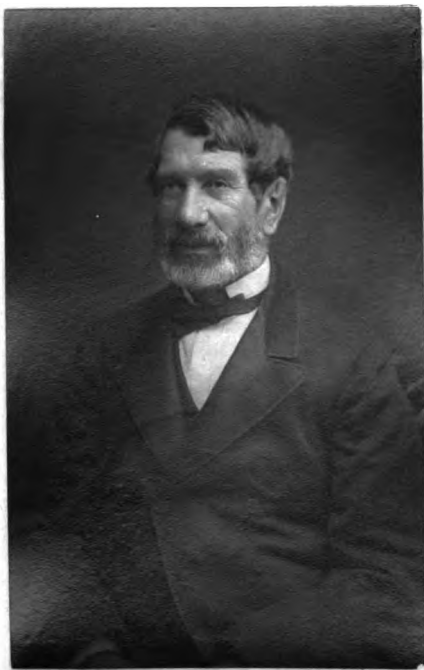
Councillor Donald Murray, quiet, unostentatious man, at a public dinner held in the Queen's Hotel, on the evening of the 26th day of March, 1868, in celebration of the successful opening of the water-works that day — Provost Breingan being in the chair — was by his brother Councillors presented with an elegant and

costly silver tea service, on the teapot of which is the following inscription:—"Presented to Mr Donald Murray, in commemoration of the opening of the Helensburgh Water-Works, and in testimony of his valuable services as convener of the Water Commissioners' Committee.—26th March, 1868."

Richly did Councillor Murray deserve the honour conferred upon him, for a more painstaking, enthusiastic, and intelligent convener of such an all-important committee as that which had the oversight of the formation of the works never lived. The time which he devoted to the work was so great that not one man out of a hundred would have made the sacrifice. It was only love for the town and regard for its interests which made his onerous duties bearable. Councillor Murray has, in his time, played many parts in the burgh. He was one of the original members of the 1st Dumbartonshire (Helensburgh) Artillery Volunteers, only three of whom survive. Mr Murray maintained his connection with the corps for many years, and rose—passing through all the grades from full private—to captain in 1870. In 1866 the Company presented Mr Murray, who was then lieutenant, with his portrait in oil. It represents him in full regimentals, and is a capital likeness. On a silver-gilt plate on the frame is the following inscription:—"Presented to Lieut. Murray, by the 1st Dumbartonshire Artillery Volunteers, as a mark of respect. — Helensburgh, November 30th, 1866."

#### PROVOST BREINGAN.

Provost Breingan, at the Queen's Hotel meeting, on the 26th March, 1868, was presented with a handsome claret jug, bearing a suitable inscription, as a memento of the



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow

*Lachlan McLachlan*

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successful introduction of water to his native town, and also as a token of the value which his brother Commissioners set upon his great labours in connection with the accomplishment of the same.

BAILIE M'LACHLAN.

Bailie M'Lachlan, worthy man ! who as a magistrate and man of business has served the public so faithfully, was presented, on the completion of his fiftieth year in trade, with his portrait, which is a most admirable likeness of the plain, blunt, honest man, and also with a "counterfeit presentment" of his worthy helpmeet—a graceful, highly attractive work of art ; and in addition to these, at the banquet in the Queen's Hotel, held in honour of Mr M'Lachlan, which was presided over by ex-Bailie Taylor, of Glasgow, there was handed over to the highly respected chief baker and ex-magistrate of the burgh, a solid silver tea service, the tray of which bears the following inscription :—" Presented to Mr Lachlan M'Lachlan, Helensburgh, with a silver tea service and portraits of himself and Mrs M'Lachlan, by his fellow-tradesmen and friends, on the occasion of his jubilee as a master baker, and in recognition of his worth and integrity. Helensburgh, 12th April, 1877. In the earlier days of the burgh the Bailie's name was "a tower of strength," and was one to conjure with withal. If it was known that he was in favour of any local scheme its chances of being put into operation were greatly bettered thereby. He was a leader in the opposition to the payment of the penny toll on the old pier, and his words uttered on that occasion were, upon the authority of "The Chronicles of Gotham," declared to have been "leavened with wisdom."



*Presentation Lines to Mr L. M'Lachlan, Baker (by an Helensburgh Workman), read at the Banquet alluded to above, by Treasurer Orr, with great effect.*

Worthy friend ! life-long connected  
 With the welfare of our town,  
 Thou art honour'd and respected,  
 And hath gain'd a good renown—  
 Having laid the sure foundation  
 Of a well-enduring fame,  
 On what's loved by every nation,  
 A good, upright, honest name.

Chief of an old trustworthy band,  
 Of right steady pioneers,  
 Who laboured, with untiring hand,  
 For the town in bygone years,  
 Keep this kindly gift in token  
 That thou hast life's best reward,  
 In a name that is not spoken  
 But with feelings of regard.

Industry crowns thy useful life  
 With honours all her own ;  
 In freedom from ambitious strife  
 Thy solid worth thou'st shown.  
 In changes of full fifty years,  
 The goodly work we trace  
 That gives to thee among thy peers  
 A first and foremost place.

With thee there lives in our esteem  
 The true devoted wife,  
 • Who long hath thrown the cheering beam  
 Of kindness o'er thy life ;  
 For many years we've known her  
 In that perfect ease and grace,  
 And the calm refined demeanour  
 Which so dignifies her place.



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow

*William Redstone*

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This mark of admiration,  
For thy rectitude may tell,  
To each future generation,  
There is joy in living well ;  
And may this true expression  
Of a people's praise thee cheer,  
And prove a choicest blessing  
Till thy last, thy closing year.

In the year 1878, and also in 1882, our townsmen did themselves the honour of honouring other two most distinguished residents and leading citizens by presenting to each his portrait in oil by an eminent artist.

As these were not only notable events in themselves, but brought out in the speeches connected with their consummation, a good deal of interesting matter concerning the history of the burgh, as well as of the public-spirited gentlemen who received the distinguished honour, I give the proceedings connected therewith at length from the local prints of the day.

PRESENTATION AND BANQUET TO WM. KIDSTON, ESQ.,  
OF FERNIEGAIK.

The first in point of time was the presentation to William Kidston, Esq., of Ferniegair, and the following notice of it is taken from the *Dumbarton Herald*, of date 13th December, 1877, which I would preface by stating that there exists very diversified opinions in Helensburgh in regard to the kind of results flowing from the energetic and successful efforts of Mr Kidston and party which prevented the railway company from forming their "station in the sea" at Helensburgh Pier, and thereby laid them under the necessity of making the station and pier at Craighendran, which has proved such a formidable rival

to the older pier, reducing it in annual value very considerably. Mr Kidston, however, honestly believed that he was championing a good cause, and hundreds of his townsmen thought, and still think, the same, and as a tangible token of their esteem for his arduous services, they made the presentation on December 6th, 1877, which I now proceed to give an account of from the columns of the paper above mentioned:—

“On Thursday night, December 6th, 1877, a large company of gentlemen assembled in the Queen’s Hotel, Helensburgh, to do honour to Mr Kidston of Ferniegair, for his spirited action in the Helensburgh Railway Station dispute. The chair was occupied by James Stirling, Esq., of Rockend, and James Keyden, Esq., acted as croupier. After the usual loyal toasts had been disposed of in orthodox fashion,

“The CHAIRMAN, in proposing the toast of the evening, which was ‘The Health of their Honoured Guest,’ returned him their best thanks, and the thanks of the whole community, for the spirited exertions he had put forth in resisting, and ultimately in dispersing, the projects of the North British Railway Company. Mr Kidston had seen at a glance that this project would have been ruinous—that it would have arrested the progress, and destroyed the prosperity of Helensburgh—that it would have reduced Helensburgh from being a flourishing and favourite watering place, into a dirty coaling place, with every imaginable and unimaginable nuisance. He had therefore resolved to oppose the project, and to baffle the Railway Company. To this he addressed his mind with the whole force of his indomitable will—to this he devoted his time, his talents, his energy, and his fortune, without stint or measure, and

he had succeeded. He had baffled the Railway Company, and put an extinguisher on their pet project. His labour and liberality had not been thrown away. On the contrary, they had been crowned with a great success, and Mr Kidston had been enabled not only to save his native town from a great calamity, but to inflict a crushing defeat on the Railway Company, in the face of Parliament and of the whole country. It had been a great achievement—a memorable specimen of the power of individual will. He (the Chairman) did not believe that there was another man in Scotland who would have had the courage to defy, or the energy to defeat, so powerful a corporation as the North British Railway Company; and it well became them, who had profited by his exertions, to thank him thus publicly for the battle which he had waged, and the victory he had won in their behalf. He (the Chairman) protested against this movement, in which Mr Kidston had been engaged, as having been instituted for the advantage of any one class in particular. If there had been one thing more praiseworthy than another in the movement, it had been the unselfish and generous spirit in which it had been conceived and carried out. In concluding, the Chairman begged, in the name of the company, to present Mr Kidston with a splendid portrait of himself, painted by Sir Daniel Macnee, Scotland's greatest painter.

“The portrait, which represents Mr Kidston in an easy sitting attitude holding a document in his hand, and with a view of Ferniegair House as the background, bears the following inscription:—‘Presented to William Kidston, Esq., of Ferniegair, by a number of the inhabitants of Helensburgh and neighbourhood, in testimony of his indefatigable efforts in promoting the prosperity and protecting the interests of the locality.—Helensburgh, 6th December, 1877.’

“MR KIDSTON, in reply, said—Mr Chairman and Gentlemen,—It was with deep feelings of satisfaction and pleasure that I received your kind invitation to be present at this banquet as the guest of the evening, and I now accept with most heartfelt gratitude your choice and appropriate present which has just been unveiled and handed over to me, in your name, by the Chairman of this brilliant and enthusiastic gathering. The inscription which you have been pleased to place on this portrait will tell the history which is attached to it, and the likeness is so good that it will rank high among the many successful works of art which have emanated from the pencil and shed forth the genius of Sir Daniel Macnee, whose great regret is that he cannot be present with us this evening. Next to the satisfaction of an approving conscience, in the discharge of what I believe to be a public duty, I value the approbation of my fellow townsmen, and above all the substantial token of your regard which I have this night received. It is now many years since I commenced to reside in this beautiful watering place, and will always feel an abiding interest in its welfare. Having been asked to occupy the chair at the public meeting of inhabitants in the King Street Hall, on 6th February last, I readily consented. On that occasion the following resolution was passed on the motion of our excellent Chairman :—‘That this meeting feel indignant at the proposal made to discontinue the Princes Street Railway Station in Helensburgh, and to form a new line and station in the sea, as it will seriously injure Helensburgh, and at the same time be of no profit to the Railway Company.’ It was further resolved at that meeting to petition Parliament against the Bill by which it was proposed to authorise these changes. Though it is obviously an arduous undertaking to fight a

Railway Company—and it requires a good deal of energy and determination to do so—yet there was clearly no alternative but to meet them in Parliament, and resist to the last their audacious project, which, if carried out, would have been a great injury to Helensburgh, and would in a most material manner have detracted from its amenity as a residential town. It was admitted that there were 300,000 travellers to and from Helensburgh in the course of a year, every one of whom would have been injured by the proposed change. The moderate number who wished to go to Kilcreggan and Dunoon over and above the Helensburgh people themselves who wished to do so, could be taken down to the pier, and along the pier, sheltered in wet weather in a variety of ways, without running them thereto by a railway line which would injure the most of the property abutting on the sea in the eastern part of the town. No person in Helensburgh had ever complained of the present station, and from our point of view it is evidently the most convenient site. The scheme was specially injurious to the people of Helensburgh, because their whole effective access to the town in which they live is dependent on the North British Company, and yet their interests were to be sacrificed for a comparatively small number of persons who wanted to get to Kilcreggan and Dunoon, and who, it will be observed, had an alternative route by the other companies' lines. A more daring proposition could hardly have been put before Parliament. Was there any possible reason why the Railway Company should become the harbour-masters of the pier? No doubt it would serve their purpose to secure possession of their pier, and so get Helensburgh completely into their hands. After getting control of the pier, there would be nothing to prevent them making

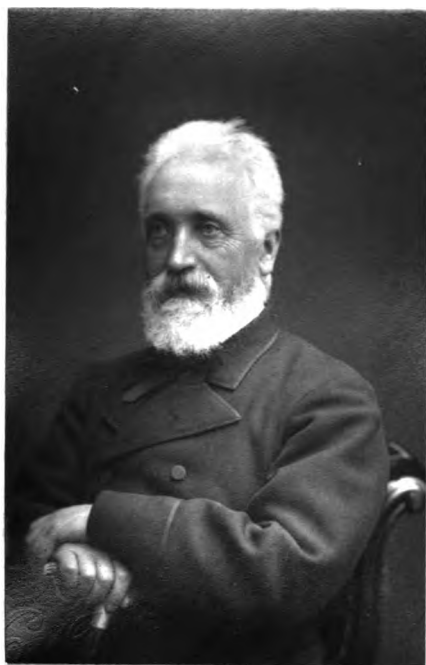


Helensburgh a shipping place for coal, and utilising all the station land in the sea when they once got their Bill, there being no prohibition in the Bill against carrying out such works. I hope, my friends, you will be lenient enough to excuse me for repeating what was said in one of our periodicals while alluding to my taking a prominent part in this contest; it said—‘When Kidston Bill meets North British Bill, then comes comes the tug of war.’ And the tug came, and by a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, I am glad to say, ‘North British Bill’ was tugged over, fell, not to rise again, and the House of Commons made the emphatic and pleasing declaration that the ‘preamble had not been proved.’

“Mr Kidston sat down amid loud and continued cheers. Other toasts were subsequently given, and a most pleasant evening was spent.”

PRESENTATION TO R. D. ORR, ESQ., LATE BURGHTREASURER.

“On Saturday afternoon, October 28th, 1882, our esteemed townsman, Robert Duncan Orr, Esq., banker, was presented with his portrait in oil, and a silver tea and coffee service, and tray, in acknowledgment of his many valuable public services, and as a mark of general esteem. Mr Orr, in May last, gave up his connection with the Town Council, after having served them faithfully as burgh treasurer over the long period of 37 years. It was thought by many of his friends a fitting time to testify, in some tangible manner, their appreciation of his public and private life. The result was this handsome testimonial, which has been remarkable for its spontaneity. The interesting ceremony took place within the Town Hall, when a large company of ladies and gentlemen, including many old residents, sat down to cake and wine. Provost Stuart presided.



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow



"The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, remarked on the great pleasure it gave him to take the chair on this most auspicious occasion. (Applause.) He would, with their permission, read a number of apologies he had received from gentlemen who were unable to be present.

"The CHAIRMAN then gave 'The Queen,' which was heartily received, followed by the singing of the National Anthem.

"EX-PROVOST BREINGAN, in making the presentation, said he felt it to be a public honour, as well as a great pleasure, to have been asked by the committee to present their handsome gift to his old and valued friend Mr Orr, who had been for the long period of 37 years intimately connected with the municipal affairs of the town. They were all aware that last year, or rather this year, he retired from the treasurership of the burgh, and afforded us an opportunity of expressing our admiration for him. When Mr Orr arrived in Helensburgh, in 1845, at the old stone dyke which stood for a pier, it was then a very small place. He came here as agent for the Western Bank, and he thought that if all the others connected with that ill-fated institution had been possessed of Mr Orr's faculties the sad calamity would not have befallen it. (Applause.) He read the inscription to them, and remarked that he had always been on the most intimate terms with Mr Orr ever since he came to Helensburgh; there was no man whose judgment he valued so much as Mr Orr's, and in any difficulty he always went first to Mr Orr for his advice, which was always readily and willingly given. Such, indeed, was the case with every one though. He did not like dilating upon the excellent qualities and abilities of Mr Orr before his face, but he must say that he did not

think any person ever took a deeper interest in the welfare of Helensburgh than Mr Orr. He trusted that he might be long spared to go in and out amongst them, and take the same interest in the place in the future as he had done in the past. (Applause.) A good deal of Mr Orr's success in life no doubt depended upon his excellent helpmate—(applause)—and no man could be possessed of a better wife and nicer family than Mr Orr, and he hoped they might be long spared to occupy the same social position as Mr Orr now occupied. (Applause.) He had met Mr Orr at shooting, boating, and curling, and like the best of friends they had quarrels, but they soon passed over. The fact that so many ladies and gentlemen came here to-day to take part in this meeting showed the great esteem in which the people of Helensburgh held Mr Orr. He asked Mr Orr to accept at the hands of his friends this handsome portrait and the silver service, and might he be long spared to enjoy the blessings of this life. Although he knew that in the ordinary course of nature he must depart from this world, he had no doubt these articles would be handed down as heirlooms to the family, and they would be much prized by them. (Applause.)

“Mr ORR, on rising to reply, received an ovation. He spoke with considerable emotion. At the outset, he stated his heart must be very cold if he did not feel deeply grateful to them all for their handsome gifts. Since he heard there was to be a presentation, he had looked forward to this hour with dread; and he was afraid, in consequence, he could not say what he should have liked to give expression to, because he could not find sufficient words to convey to them the sense of the honour they had done him and his family. He remembered when a young man, looking from

the hill above Greenock at Helensburgh, thinking it one of the loveliest places in all broad Scotland, and longing so much to be resident in that vale, little thinking that later in life his happy lot was to be cast among its inhabitants. The hills around looked so beautiful, the fields in the autumn waving with their golden grain, the pleasant woods, and the fine prospect, all contributed to make it a place of Paradise. He proceeded to give some pleasant reminiscences of the town after his arrival in it; how the old dyke where he landed had now given way to a splendid pier. The front street had changed its appearance so considerably that any person who had seen it some time before would not recognise it now. The jurisdiction of the authorities, too, at that time was very limited, and the confines of the burgh were exceedingly small. Where the Roman Catholic Church now stood was then far into the country. It was not long, however, after he came that Helensburgh began to shake itself together, and applied to Parliament for a municipal bill; and the discussion of the bill in Glasgow at present reminded him of the movement here, and its ultimate results, when the chairman left the meeting, explaining that if they expected him to wait till they had discussed the clauses in the Bill they were much mistaken. The Act, however, was adopted; and the following were the members elected to the Council under it:—Mr Richard Kidston, Mr Peter Walker, Mr William Yuile, Mr Alexander M'Leod, Mr Robert Taylor, Mr David Waddell, Mr R. D. Orr, Mr A. Oughterstoun, Mr James Buchanan, Mr Duncan Macfarlane, Mr J. G. Whyte Browne, and Mr James Henderson. Mr Oughterstoun and Mr Browne did not accept office, and Mr Lachlan M'Lachlan and Colonel Stewart were substituted. Of these

gentlemen only five were alive at the present day. Of all the churches now existing in Helensburgh there was not one standing when he came there. The only sort of a church then in use shortly after he came was what was now known as the King Street Hall, which was at the time considered a handsome building. He attended the first sermon which was preached by Dr Heugh, and he yet remembered the text, which was taken from Exodus—"Where I record My name, I will come unto them, and bless them;" and if he might judge by future events, that promise had been answered. In those days, which were crowned with social parties in the evenings, it was a very difficult thing for a man to pick his way along the road to attend such meetings, and at the end of the journey his boots told a story which he himself did not care to repeat. They had no lamps then. He was the first treasurer in Helensburgh. They were not long in the Council before differences of opinion became evident, and a minority resigned at one time because they did not get their own way. (Laughter.) He was one of the remaining members, Mr M'Lachlan being the other. He had no thought that, when he was retiring from his public duties, he was to receive such a magnificent present as this, because he was quite content to go into private life without any recognition, satisfied that he had done the best he could to promote the prosperity of the town. In selecting Mr M'Taggart as the artist they had made a very judicious selection; and he never employed his visits to Edinburgh better than on this occasion. He was gratified at the presence of the ladies, because ever since he came here he was recognised as a ladies' man—(laughter)—and he liked to move and have his being in their society. (Renewed

laughter.) He was sorry he could not have attended the ladies' meeting in town the other day, because he was in favour of their rights. He assured them again how grateful he was, and begged of them to accept his best wishes. (Applause.)

"Ex-PROVOST BREINGAN forgot to ask them to drink Mr Orr's health, but he hoped they would now do so.

"The toast was heartily received, and three cheers given for Mr Orr.

"MR SIMSON gave 'The Health of the Artist, Mr M'Taggart,' and in doing so, he wished him health and long continuance of his hitherto brilliant career. (Applause.)

"MR M'TAGGART briefly replied, thanking them for the good opinion of his work, and that the remarks by Mr Simson had given him much satisfaction. He could only say that the sittings Mr Orr gave him for the portrait were a source of much pleasure to him, and his only regret was that they were so short. Other toasts of a minor order followed.

"The portrait, as will have been observed, is the work of Mr Wm. Taggart, R.S.A. The silver tea and coffee service, which was supplied by Messrs James Muirhead & Sons, Glasgow, is pure Indian in style, executed in repousse work, and the figures round the body of the pots represent the signs of the Zodiac. The ornamentation of the tray is Indian in style, and very chaste. It bore the following inscription beautifully engraved:—'Presented to Robert Duncan Orr, Esq., with Tea and Coffee Service, and Portrait, by a number of friends in Helensburgh and neighbourhood, in recognition of his valuable public services, and as a mark of general esteem.—October, 1882.'"





## CHAPTER IX.

### CUSTOMS OF THE OLD HELENSBURGHERS.

**W**HAT astonishment would possess the soul of one of the present generation could he awaken on a summer morning and find himself transported back a century in history, and mingle in the customs of our ancestors. Not less amazing would it be to him than the changes in the American village to Rip Van Winkle on returning after his twenty years' sleep in the Katskill Mountains. These forefathers of ours had curious customs, and followed what seems to us (just as ours will seem a century hence to the then generation), outlandish and absurd fashions. Relics of these old customs still remain, but only as an echo of the dead past, and a few more years will mark their entire decay. Births, marriages, and deaths, as well as high holidays, alike witnessed them, and whisky flowed through the whole.

When a child was born it was not considered lucky unless each visitor to the house had a dram and a piece of bannock, specially baked and specially flavoured with coriander seed. At baptism a piece of cake was artfully

concealed somewhere in the infant's dress—a custom we have never been able to explain on any hypothesis, or trace to any superstition. At marriage there was the invariable whisky, and almost invariable debauch—none of your stiff, formal luncheons and done with it, but a hearty carouse, and dancing protracted late into the following day. No work of confectionary art, in the shape of a castellated bride's-cake, decorated the table for the delectation of the youngsters, but often an immense tub of mashed potatoes, in which a ring was concealed and eagerly supped for by the keenly-appetised youths and maidens with noisy glee and endless jokes.

On occasion of a death the funeral feast furnished forth no cold baked meats, but a certain sum was set apart, representative of the rank in life of the deceased, to spend in drinking his "dredgy." Often this sum was a matter of testamentary disposition or death-bed instruction. The drinking commenced at the funeral service, or services, for there were often two, and sometimes three. After the first prayer bannocks and cheese and whisky were passed round, and each guest was expected to partake. After the second prayer and third prayer; if a third, another course of these followed; then the friends and acquaintances marched to the kirkyard. If the deceased was buried in the parish of his residence, the journey was comparatively short, and the halts at public-houses few; but if in a distant parish the *cortege* often took a day, and sometimes two, to reach its destination. Every licensed house at reasonable intervals was halted at, and more bread and cheese and liquor consumed. Too often, by the time the last resting-place was reached, numbers had dropped off by the wayside, or turned

at some halting-place from inability to pursue the rest of the journey; and only the more sober, but still often muddled, part of the company consigned the remains to their kindred dust. We have heard of instances in which the company arrived at the kirkyard entirely oblivious of the fact that the body was left behind, as they straggled onwards forgetful of their sad errand. After the last ceremony was performed, drinking was generally resumed on the homeward route, and finally concluded in the house of the departed.

Hallowe'en customs are gradually dying out. Formerly to youngsters the advent of Hallowe'en was anxiously looked forward to. It was their great night—a Walpurgis night, when witches, evil spirits, and all uncanny things were abroad holding high revel. Gatherings at neighbours' houses were the rule, and prying into futurity by burning nuts, pulling kail stocks, and other means were incidental to it—alas for the bachelors who possessed a well-stocked kail-yard; it was sure to be displenished, and when the wintry morn dawned on it a mass of broken stocks and vacant root holes met the owner's inquiring gaze. Nuts and apples for weeks previous indicated its approach by being piled up in the little shop windows—not the luscious tempting fruit ripened under an American sun, or the shapely nuts of Barcelona, but the humble and hard Scotch pippin and the hazel nut gathered by the wandering tinker and his ragged family in early October—dainties trying to the teeth and digestive organs, but highly prized for all that.

After sunset, the juveniles paraded the roads around with lanterns hollowed out of turnips, on which grotesque

faces were cut, and failing turnips with a bit of candle stuck in a stock, and shouting—

“ Hallowe’en, a nicht at e’en,  
I heard an unco squaking,  
Dool Dumps is thrashing his wife,  
And gi’eing her a paiking,”

and similar doggerel rhymes. Later on in the night the fun waxed loud and furious betwixt lads and lasses ; kail-yards were desolated, apples were ducked for, blind-man’s buff played at in the kitchen (or barn if there was one), spells and incantations timidly ventured on with beating heart and bated breath, hemp seed sown in the fields, and shirt sleeves washed at the junction of the streams, lovers burned emblematically in the shape of nuts in the fire, and future constancy thus predicted, and many a courtship which had vacillated between hope and fear for the last six months brought under the lea of the peat-stack to a joyful issue.

About the end of summer, and near close of school holiday time, another annual festival occupied an eventful place in the annals of the parish—pleasant to the elders, but not quite so grateful to the boys who performed a leading part in it. This was the Redding of the Marches. Most villages and towns in Scotland had but ill-defined boundary marks, and especially was this the case when there was right of common or pasture or a stretch of moor possessed by the village, the boundaries of which might be certain turf dykes at one point, the junction of a stream at another, and an ill-defined foot track as a third.

To prevent future ignorance of these landmarks, and save cost of boundary walls or stones, the elders of the village assembled on a given day, generally accompanied by

the schoolmaster, and fortified with a fair allowance of provisions and whisky, set out to perambulate the marches. Previously a dozen or so of the boys of the village were caught and impressed into the company. This was sometimes a difficult task, but the difficulty was generally overcome by liberal promises of a silver sixpence on good behaviour, or some present equally appropriate to boyish imagination. They, as the rising generation and future masters, were to be taught where the boundaries were, that the knowledge might be handed down to the future. And the mode of conveying the geographical knowledge was by a judicious application of the birch at each boundary mark, which was administered by the dominie. What properly-constituted boy could ever forget the scene of such an occurrence?

The ceremony was both ludicrous and painful. *Il faut payer pour ses plaisirs.* Some of the boys operated on howled, others sulked and bore it quietly, or with a ghastly grin; none seemed to appreciate it, and all went as captives from one point to another, a tear-stricken and despondent mob, till the last point had been reached, and the last item of instruction had been duly implanted in the seat of knowledge. Then there was a general release, and a kind of grim comfort succeeded the look of former despondency. The unhappy boys, who exhibited no particular desire to sit down for some days after, were on return generally chaffed by their elder companions who had passed through the same ordeal; but it is fair to add that a solatium was generally liberally made to them at the end of the day's instruction by the authorities who had required their attendance, and this operated as a salve for their wounded feelings and smarting bodies.

The great annual festival day, however, was New Year's Day, the one great holiday of Scotland yet. Old and young welcomed its advent. It was heralded by supplies of whisky, bannocks, and short-bread, and among the wealthier classes currant-bun—the Scotch plum-pudding. On Hogmanay night—New Year's eve—there was no sleep, in the rural districts at anyrate. As that night advanced the young men in groups set out to visit all their acquaintances, male and female, supplied with bottles and buns, and soon as the clock struck twelve, the intended houses were successively visited, the bottle displayed, and the compliments of the season passed.

It is fair to say, however, that with all the supplies of liquor and inducements to excessive indulgence—this was the exception, not the rule—the rule of sobriety was not much exceeded. Nothing like the debasing drunkenness one meets now-a-days in the streets of our town was ever witnessed.

The early morn was spent in visiting; the remainder of the day in out-door sports. Shinty matches, shooting matches, raffles, and ball-playing, with foot and sack racing, comprehended nearly all the out-door sports when the weather admitted, or if, as at such times happened, a frost had set in, wherever there was a sheet of ice suitable, thither curlers and shinty players went, followed by the boy population bent on slides, for skating as a popular amusement was not as yet. It was a day of general liberty, and by the idle and dissipated its festivities were prolonged for a week, or till there money was gone. But generally to the more orderly disposed section of the community, by midnight the zest had worn off the festivities, and the tired revellers willingly sought their beds, content with the joys

the day had brought. Now most of these customs are broken up. The few remain at home, and the many seek by the facilities of railway travelling the enjoyment of quieter and better attractions than those within the reach of a ruder age, and the sports and pastimes of former days are beginning to live only in song and story.

Among other departed games lingering in the memory of our venerable inhabitants is cock-fighting. The almost last traces we find of such sport are amongst the school-boys of a past age. In our parish there were two school customs now extinct, but common, we believe, at the end of last century in most rural districts. One was that every boy should daily in winter bring a turf to school, not that the turf was used for the school fires, but the surplus went as an offering to the dominie's stack ; and the other a Candlemas cock. As a treat to the intellectual powers of his pupils, the teacher inaugurated an annual cock-fight, at which the boys attended, when the best of the birds were engaged in battle, and slain and mangled cocks lay prone on the earth, or moved piteously about ; but the owner of the victorious bird was crowned with honour, and its fame chronicled for many a day afterwards. What became of the unused, maimed, and dead birds the boys were never curious to inquire ; indeed, the amount of cock-a-leekie the master might indulge in, or the other disposal of the birds, were matters which entered not into reflection. The boys' interests were absorbed by the victor, not by the defeated or reserve forces, and they were not mercenary enough to calculate the value of the Candlemas offering to the teacher.

It is well that advancing civilization has set a brand on such customs. May they never be revived. It is 70 years since the last school cock-fight we can learn of took place.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE QUEER CHARACTERS OF HELENSBURGH.

**I**N the early days of the burgh we had a goodly sprinkling of such in our midst and sketches of a number of these amusing worthies are now submitted, in addition to the few that I have already given elsewhere in the book as illustrative of the matter with which they are connected. In the past, society presented a more picturesque appearance than what it does at the present day. In the olden time there was ample room and verge enough for humanity to develop itself in a strongly marked, greatly varied individuality. In the present it is "cribbed, cabined, and confined" within a rigid mould, receiving therein the indelible impress of the superfine, engine-turned, unca guid, stamp of the latter half of the nineteenth century. I do not know that the world, as a world to live in or to die in, is much, if any, the better of the changes alluded to that have passed over the face of society; but be that as it may, as is most natural, I look fondly back upon the rude, non-prosaic past, with its more ample freedom from the galling yoke of Mrs Grundy. But a truce to speculating on a



subject upon which there is so much room for diversity of opinion. I will now go on with the exhibition of the Droll Folk. The first that I will trot out for your delectation is

“WATERLOO.”

The very name breathes war, and is suggestive of powder and bayonets—recalls “the thin red line” of dauntless heroes who, peppered at by shot and shell on that awful June morning, only clenched their teeth more tightly, and grasped their muskets more resolutely, as they saw comrade after comrade mowed down. The name also calls up visions of the grand rallying charge of the glorious old Scots Greys, which has become famous in the history of the world. But it is not with a field of battle, but with a man that we have at present to do, and with him I had better proceed forthwith to deal.

The man yclept “Waterloo,” as I remember him, was a straight, elderly man, of grizzly locks, and spare figure, who had, after many wanderings, settled down here to enjoy his grateful country’s handsome pension of sixpence per diem, on which he lived, or rather starved. He was fond of reciting his adventures by sea and land, and, like Othello, he

“Spoke of most disastrous chances,  
Of moving accidents by flood and field,  
Of hairbreadth ’scapes i’ the imminent deadly breach.”

But I fear that the strict historical accuracy of many of his narratives was open to suspicion, for his stories, as he grew older, improved, in his telling, very much in flavour, and in variety and intensity of action, leading one to the opinion that the old son of Mars was given somewhat to romancing. Being desirous, in this veracious history, of presenting to my readers facts and not fictions, I must refrain from telling any of the old boy’s yarns, although

they possessed considerable merit as works of art. Our old friend first smelt powder under Wellesley in the Peninsular campaign. He had carried arms at the siege of Ciudad Roderigo, and at Badajoz, afterwards joining the forces at Brussels; he was in the engagement on the 18th June near the now historical town of Hugomont; and he gloried in reciting his remembrances of that awful day and bloody field, and from that *penchant* he received his nickname.

Waterloo was born in or near the Royal Burgh of Inverkeithing. His father dying, and leaving a young family totally unprovided for, caused our embryo hero and his mother to be cast adrift on the treacherous waters of the world without a pilot. Having received a small modicum of education at the parish school, the bit ragged youngster was apprenticed to a smith, who so embittered his existence by constant thrashings and cursings that, early on one summer Sunday morning, when the other inmates of the household were wooing the drowsy god, he got up and packed all his worldly possessions in a handkerchief, locked the door behind him, threw away the key, then crossed the ferry, and tramped all forlorn to Edinburgh, where, after knocking about for a week or two, living on his wits, and not finding them nutritious enough to keep him from starvation, he listened to the seductive tongue of a recruiting sergeant, accepted the king's bounty and the king's clothing, and inspired by hopes of glory and fortune, which, alas! were never to be fulfilled, he became a soldier. To defend himself from hunger, he ran the risk of being food for gunpowder, and became a defender of his country.

Like most old soldiers, he was a handy fellow, and could turn his large experiences to advantage in many ways. Unfortunately, there were not many opportunities offered him here for their display, but he made the best of them. In the summer time he did odd gardening jobs, and in the winter time he did a spell of work in the haircutting line. There being no barber then in the village, Waterloo drove a considerable, though by no means a lucrative, business in that walk. When his nerves were steady, as they were betimes, he shaved in a passable manner; and as for his haircutting exploits these were principally confined to the heads of young Helensburgh, as the oldsters would not yield their pericraniums to his tender mercies. He had two or three bowls of various sizes, one of which he clapped on the head of the party to be operated on, and all the hair that appeared below the rim was shorn off as closely as possible. The result, if not artistic, was at least uniform in its nature, and as it cheaply lightened the head of a considerable weight, it was deemed on the whole satisfactory. When a customer of a fairishly good social position presented his head to be operated upon, the bowl was discarded, and the hair was then cut upon certain mathematical principles, which had the resultant effect of presenting the polled head as having a series of ridges or terraces rising in regular succession from the base to the crown. The appearance of the cropped one was rather peculiar, but it was on the whole generally considered to be in regard to style the correct thing, and smacking of the Parisian touch. The veteran also attempted, in a humble way, sign-painting, but his letters had a curious tendency to show in one group various sizes, and these very irregularly spaced. I have seen one of his signs, which ran

thus :—"Joh nSmi th lic ense d To S ell." He also did a little in the coopering way. Washing-tubs had a tendency during hot or frosty weather to get loose in the girders and staves, and "Waterloo" was considered to be a good hand at repairing them.

Old age and infirmities at last laid their numbing hands upon him, and rendered him unfit for his multifarious, though unlucrative, occupations. His miserably inadequate pension was now supplemented by a scanty allowance from the poor rates ; but these combined barely kept the wolf from the door. His dwelling-place was a little back room, where he dwelt alone. He kept the place scrupulously clean, and although miserably furnished, it was yet adorned by a few trifling military relics, which gave an inkling to the early history of the occupant. With his own hands he polished the floor, table, and two hard-wood chairs, and scoured every bit of metal in the house to its utmost resplendency, and with his old military spirit he prided himself on the thorough pipe-claying and polishing of his room. One day a lady visitor called on the old soldier, and noticing some rat-holes in his apartment, said,—"Dear me, Waterloo, you seem to be badly troubled with rats." "I was, ma'am, some years ago," grimly replied the old man ; "but since I've got on the Poor Board they don't trouble me much."

Come forth, thou erstwhile ragged losel, known to the burghers of seventy years back by the cognomen of

"SCUDIA,"

and shew thyself as thou appeared to those ancients. I know not whether the heathenish-looking name of the party referred to was an abbreviation or corruption of any name in any known language ; but, be that as it may, it

was borne at the time referred to by a lithe, young fellow of about fifteen years of age, with sun-burned visage, and an abundance of brown unkempt hair. His clothing was of the most miscellaneous description—some portions too small, others too large, and held together about his person in some mysterious sort of way unknown to the uninitiated. No sanitary officer would or could have objected to the arrangement on the ground of deficient ventilation, and no artist would have found fault with the model on the plea that he did not present a picturesque enough appearance. This moving rag-heap's real name was Willie Begg, but so seldom did he hear it addressed to him that he almost ceased to realize that he had any ownership in the same. Nearly all the boys of that period, whatever they may do now, rejoiced in nicknames. There were, among others, "Bottle o' Beer," "Baggie," "Bourocks," "Deilly," the latter the biggest deil o' a callant of the lot, as became his name. The names were bestowed either from some peculiarity in the appearance, or sometimes by accident, and at other times from the habits of the recipients, and often clung to the bearers through life. Scoudia's parents having either died or deserted him, he was brought up by a grandmother, but his rearing was pretty much that of a young savage. His granny provided him with a scanty bed, scanty food, scanty shelter, and let him pick up his scanty wardrobe wherever or however he liked. He, in fact, was cast upon his own scanty resources at an early age, and these were limited in range in a small village devoted principally to fishing. He did odd jobs to the farmers in winter, and in summer he lounged with his companions about the pier or beach, looking after being picked up by pleasure or fishing parties to pull an oar, or do any other

work which might be wanted. In this way he earned an irregular wage. By virtue of his strength, prowess in battle, and impolite volubility of tongue, he, among his compatriots, was considered "cock of the roost." He had secured and kept that distinction at the cost of blood, hair, and bruises many. He was a hardy fellow, who took and gave blows with great equanimity of spirits, untinged by a longing for revenge. Not only was he distinguished as a pugilist, but he was equally admired as a shinty player, an oarsman, and as the crackest swimmer of all the crowd who sported their figures in the "briney" about Colquhoun's Dock of a summer evening. The latter accomplishment had an eventful bearing on his future career in this wise :— One summer day, an elderly gentleman, accompanied by his son and daughter, the latter being about twelve years of age, went from the pier in a row-boat for a sail by themselves. Before they had proceeded a dozen yards, it became abundantly evident that they were totally unaccustomed to the handling of a boat. The old gentleman, who was portly in figure, and sported a pair of gold spectacles, pulled the bow oar, and "caught a crab" and a fall, and exhibited his gaitered extremities in the air. Getting up he blamed his son for the catastrophe, and in shouting to him, "Whoa ! whoa !" he stumbled and capsized the boat, spilling the trio into the water. Then the struggle began ; the father clinging to the keel of the boat, and shouting frantically ; the son clutching the father ; the girl nowhere visible. Our hero Scoudia, who had been lounging about the shore, seeing how matters stood, shed his garment in a twinkling, and plunged into the water to the rescue. The girl he clutched as she rose to the surface, and landed her without much difficulty ; but she was very much exhausted

and speechless. Meanwhile some other parties had rescued the old gentleman and his son from their perilous position, and these stood on the pier in streaming garments. The old fellow's first impulses, strange to say, were not those of gratitude, but of grief, for on feeling the bridge of his nose, he spluttered out, "Oh, my spec's, my guid gold spec's are gone."

The soaked pleasure-seekers were assisted off to John Traver's, but Scoudia, with a keen eye to the main chance, made an effort to recover the gold spec's, in which he was successful, and forthwith he carried them in triumph to their owner. The rescued party, who were now re-habilitated and restored to their senses, were loud in the praises of Scoudia's gallant behaviour, and the old gentleman, who was a Glasgow corn merchant, got out of him his past history and his future prospects, and, further, got to know what Scoudia, above all other things, would like to be, and that was a doctor. It is not easy to understand how such a desire could have had birth within his bosom. "Well perhaps something might be done for you in that line," replied his new friend; "I'll see to it when I get back to Glasgow."

And he was as good as his word, for within a month a messenger was dispatched to Helensburgh with the needful to clothe decently the poor street Arab and bring him up to the city. A situation had been obtained for him in a druggist's shop; his education was paid for by his benefactor; and after some years of hard climbing up the hill of learning, our patient, clever, self-denying friend, Scoudia, now Mr William Begg, wrought himself up to the position of honestly adding "surgeon" to his name. The old corn merchant frequently invited the rescuer of his daughter to his house,

and the mutual flame of love began to lowe in the bosoms of these twain, and ten years after the decisive incident in his life, having secured a lucrative Indian appointment, the bit bonnie lassie that he had snatched from the jaws of death accompanied him to the East as his blushing bride.

After years of successful industry, they returned to their native country, with their interesting family of children, and settled at Helensburgh. One day, when the doctor was on its pier, a sun-burned, dissipated-looking loafer said to him, "Ay, Scoudia, for a' ye look sae big, man, I mind o' ye when ye were like mysel', a ragged fallow, rinnin' wild about the streets, or takin' an oar on the water for a few coppers." "That's all true that you say," calmly replied the medicine man; "but I have made the best of my opportunities, and you seemingly have made the very worst of yours; and that principally has led to our diverse positions in life. Go and try and redeem the wasted past, and never until then dare to address me again!"

The next oddity that I will bring before your notice is

"JENNY THE POST."

And Jenny, woman, how shall I adequately deal with thy memory? Thy life was not by any means a well-regulated one; but let me touch the limning thereof with a delicate, tender touch, for wert thou not of the same stock as myself, and with thee have I not had many a hearty joke and friendly crack in the days o' auld langsyne? So, as "bluid is thicker than water," let me approach this sketch of thy humble, useful, albeit wayward, life, in a becoming spirit. Jenny M'Auslan, the post, was a native of Row parish, and lived in it, died in it, and was buried in it. Strange as it may appear, when looked at in the light of modern arrangements, half



a century ago it was no unusual thing for women to be employed as post-runners. These hardy females, for a most miserable pittance, executed, and executed well, the arduous work of letter delivery in many a rural district. Amongst these was Jenny. Some of my readers may remember her still. She was a gaunt, spare woman, whose countenance bore faint traces of the good looks which graced it in early life. With leather wallet slung over her shoulder, in summer and winter, in cold and heat, she trudged her weary rounds on Garelochside delivering the missives entrusted to her care. She had a quick eye, was shrewish of speech, keen in retort, and a shrewd judge of character, but pawky withal, and one with whom it was somewhat dangerous to have a passage-at-arms. But in spite of her sharp speech and unfeminine ways, she was kindly to bairns and grown-up folks who took an interest in her welfare. Although Jenny was faithful to her duties, and moved on her beat as steady as the pendulum of a clock, yet she had detractors. The supreme weakness of Jenny was a "lowin' drouth," which the quenching of the same not infrequently brought her under ministerial and other rebukes. For some slight delinquency in the direction indicated, a gentleman, at whose house she was officially a daily visitor, took her to task for the same in this wise: "Jenny, you know that my late father and all the family have always been your friends, but if an irregularity like this is repeated, you cannot count on us being such any more." Jenny birsed up and retorted, "Dinna compare yersel', my man, wi' yer faither; my faigs, he was a gentleman, an' that's mair than ye're likely tae be, if ane may judge by present appearances." Her minister met her one day in the village after her day's work was over, gey an' fu', and said to her, "O, Jenny, Jenny, this is sad work,

reeling again." "Deed, Mr Laurie," said the unblushing postess, "ane canna aye be spinnin'." One of the ruling elders of the Kirk thought it his duty to caution a lady against giving pecuniary gifts to Jenny, because of their being misapplied. The irate dame, being informed thereof, took the elder to task for his officiousness the first time she met him, and in angry tones screamed out to him, "I say, did ye, ye ill-faured loon an' frail stoop o' the Kirk, gang and tell Mrs Malagrowther that I was o'erta'en wi' liquor?" "Yes; I saw you myself lying helpless on the roadside." "Ye saw me in that unhappy condition, and did ye no help me hame?" "No," was the rejoinder. "Weel, had I seen ye fu', an' lyin' in a ditch, I wad hae held oot baith hands, and helpit ye oot wi' richt gudewull. O, man, think shame o' yersel'; ye didna on that solemn occasion act the part o' a gude Samaritan." The elder made tracks. On another occasion, being admonished for a similar offence, she retorted, "I dinna weel see hoo ye o' a' men can hae the face tae lay ocht o' the kind tae my charge. Gudeness kens it's only a sma' quantity o' the cratur I can get; but I saw yesterday a five-gallon cask o't bein' ta'en up tae your hoose. I'll defy the world tae say that the like o' that was ever seen enterin' my hoose. Sae ye had e'en better keep yer ain door clean, an' no trouble yer neebours till then."

It is but right to say that in spite of Jenny's failings in the way o' takin' a wee drappie o'er much, she was otherwise a reputable woman, against whom the tongue of slander could not wag. For many long years she discharged her official duties upon the whole to the satisfaction of the general community; but a rapidly increasing population brought about such an increase of work as she could not overtake, and then she was superseded by a male. Her latter

years were spent in considerable poverty, but poverty alleviated by the kind attentions of many old friends, who admired the old woman's sturdy independence of spirit. Like a true Scot, she could suffer and be strong rather than be weak and batten on the dole of enforced charity. At one time she abode alone in a small semi-ruinous cottage in a bonnie grassy hollow beside the wimpling burn of Aldonault, on the Ardenconnel estate, which had become the property of a great iron man, Mr W——, who looked with disfavour upon the humble sheilin' and its lonely inmate, and took the opportunity to pull it down one day in the absence of its mistress. Thus summarily dislodged, our heroine was, owing to the scarcity of houses in the neighbourhood, relegated to the session-house of Row Old Kirk, which stood for a considerable period after the present one was built. While she thus dwelt among the dead, a rather curious incident occurred. Mr W——, the rich man who had ejected her from her former dwelling, died, was buried, and lifted up his eyes goodness only knows for certain where in the other world, but Jenny thought she knew. After lying in the grave for some time, it was deemed advisable to remove the corpse therefrom, so as to make a built vault of it, and the coffin was temporarily laid in the Old Kirk during the operations, which were carried on by the aid of the light afforded by flaring torches, which work I happened to be an eye-witness of. As the labourers bore the coffin into the Kirk, Jenny, at her door-cheek, addressed the lifeless tenant thus, "Come awa, Maister W——. Wi' a' yer maisterfu'-ness ye're lowly enough noo I'm thinkin'. Ye pu'ed the hoose aboot my heid ance, ye hard-hearted fallow, an' I telt ye then that the day nicht come when the king nicht come in the cadger's road, an' ye nicht be gled o' a nicht's

lodgin's frae me. Ye were aye stinkin' wi' pride ; and noo, if my nose disna deceive me, ye're a' stink thegither ; but come awa, I'll no grudge ye a nicht's quarters. Ye're heartily welcome tae them, sic-like as they are, but the Lord kens they're ower guid for ye. Nae doot they're cauld, but ye'll maybe get hetter anes by an' bye."

By this time Jenny was getting to be very frail. Her figure was bent and decrepit, and her sight bad. A few old friends, who had stuck to her through good and bad report, now contributed such a sum as secured for the old public servant such comforts as were deemed necessary for her in her declining days. Her pawkiness and her power of retort never forsook her ; nor yet did her liking for "a wee drappie o't" diminish. Some one suggested that the doctor, who when in that quarter, often visited her should recommend more of beef-tea or mutton-broth, and less of *aqua vitae*, as on the whole likely to prove more advantageous. Jenny replied, "Hoot awa, what dae doctors ken aboot what's guid an' what's no guid for an auld woman." The doctor consoling with her one day, said, "Jenny, there's no use in giving you medicine ; the only thing I can prescribe for you is a little stimulant." Jenny whispered, "That's richt, doctor, mak' it whusky, like a canny man."

The old post has long since gone to her rest, and sleeps beside her kith and kin in the old kirkyard of the parish.

The next and last specimen of the *genus homo* of the queer order that my space admits of submitting is

"JOHNNY THE NAILER."

The making of hand-made nails was, a considerable time back, a rather lucrative industry. Machinery had not then superseded manual labour in that craft. Although nailmaking had its headquarters in St. Ninian's and one or

two other towns, yet there were scattered over the country isolated parties who lived by it, and amongst them was Johnny, the subject of this sketch, who was to the manner born and bred in Stirlingshire. When I first became acquainted with him, he had a little smithy in a back building in the town, which served as a workshop by day and a dormitory by night. Johnny's trade was so small that he could not afford the luxury of a wife. Indeed, it may be doubted whether he ever dreamt of such an extravagance. His earnings could not have exceeded ten shillings a-week, and on or of that humble sum he contrived to feed, clothe, and lodge himself. To be sure his wardrobe was, not by any means extensive; for, so far as I can remember he seemed ever to wear the grimy, tattered, and stained home spun suit, which appeared to be endowed with immortality, over the nether garments of which there was displayed a torn leather apron. On Sundays he sported an antique milkedew suit, including a castor hat, which had evidently belonged to his grandfather. Johnny was little of stature, and of that sallow complexion which seems to appertain to the craft to which he belonged. In general he was taciturn and reserved in manner; but when roused he had a most wicked tongue, which he could use to some purpose. He had no intimate friends, and few associates, possibly because of the fewness of the leisure hours which he could devote to the forming of such ties, it could not be done, because, in his own words, "It was the constant fecht o' life to keep life in."

He had received a fairly good education, and was possessed of a tolerably intimate acquaintance with the contents of the Bible; but for all that, for some reason or other, he had no reverence for either ministers or elders.

He used to say, "They gentry dinna darken my door, and I dinna often darken theirs." He used to thus summarise what he called Christian work :—"Whyles leddies will look in on me, an' say, 'Oh, John, such a disagreeable place to live in! I wonder how you can live here. I hope that you don't drink any, John. It's a dreadful thing, my Christian friend, to spend money on strong drink. Here's a tract, my poor brother; read it carefully and prayerfully, and it may do you good.' The said tract was drawn oot frae a bundle o' the same, an' dropt doon at arm's length on a chair as if she was feart for infection, and then madam sailed oot o' the place. It's a funny kin' of Christianity that, I rather think." In entertaining these feelings, he was neither better nor worse than tens of thousands of hard-working men of the present day, for whom presumably many beautiful churches are built, but who persistently neglect to enter their precincts for want of a brotherly, sympathetic invitation strong enough to overcome their inertia. Our churches, were they less devoted to the consideration of Papal aggressions, Sunday observance, sustentation funds, heresy hunts, or Disestablishment, and more devoted to the burning question of how to exercise a living sympathy for the brotherhood of man, and to seek and save the lost, and reclaim the wanderer, it would be better for both the Church and the world.

Johnny had one accomplishment, and that was his ability to sing, and sing well. His voice was a tenor one, and in his latter and evil days it stood him in good stead, for by it then he had almost to earn his livelihood. His *repertoire* embraced the ordinary run of street ballads, and also a few songs of his own composing. The latter were not, by any

means, brilliant efforts, amongst the best of them is the following:—

THE TOOM MEAL-POCK.

It's hard to bear the want o' gear,  
And scorn of unca folk ;  
But the sicht that draws the bitterest tear,  
Is the toom meal-pock.

The toom meal-pock, ma freens,  
The toom meal-pock ;  
Where'er ye bide, oh! wae betide,  
The toom meal-pock.

The wintry wind may blaw its warst,  
Ye'll stand it like a rock,  
Wi' comfort warstle through the blast,  
Wi' a full meal pock.  
The toom meal-pock, &c.

Auld Jacob's sons to Egypt cam',  
Ne'er dreading ony yoke,  
When wives an' bairns grat at hame  
Ower a toom meal pock.  
The toom meal-pock, &c.

They gat o' corn a full supply,  
Without a sneer or stroke ;  
And I to you, my freens, apply  
To fill my meal-pock.  
A fu' meal-pock, ma freens,  
A fu' meal-pock ;  
The best o' views, the best o' news,  
Is a fu' meal-pock.



## CHAPTER XI.

### HISTORY OF THE TABERNACLE AND OLD LIGHT BURGH CHAPELS.

IT might be as well at this stage in the running of my veracious chronicle, to give a somewhat lengthened notice of the two oldest congregations of the town, cursorily mentioned a few pages back. The oldest shall receive my attention first.

#### THE OLD TABERNACLE CHAPEL

was erected in 1803, on a site in James Street. It was like most of the other ecclesiastical edifices of the period, an ungainly square mass of masonry, utterly devoid of grace—or gracefulness I should rather say, as it might be wrong to say that the church was devoid of grace. At the time of its erection, the town was beginning to be used as a summer resort, or “saut-water” quarters, for the better-to-do denizens of the town of gude Sanct Mungo, who found their way to the place by public coach, carrier’s cart or waggon, for as yet steamboats were not, nor was that mode of travelling entirely devoid of pleasures for the youngsters; for, in sunny weather, it had its recompenses in the shape of feeding alternating with the sweet oblivion



of sleep. For the oldsters it had its recompenses, among other things, in *dramatic* entertainments, which came off at the many different stages on the journey.

After the Glesca' folk got duly installed in the place, they found that it afforded bread, mutton, and grocery goods after an irregular fashion ; but if the supply of these ran short, as it was known to do betimes when there was a crush of half a dozen or so of extra people came to town, M'Farlane's wherry had to be pressed into the service to bring a supply of the necessaries of life from Greenock.

The nearest spiritual provision was that obtainable at the Kirk of the Row, and as the Kirk would not come to them, they, if they wanted the provender, had to go to the Kirk for supply. The lazy or indifferent couldna be fashed gaun the length. The unca gude said that the material served up there for their spiritual nourishment was cauld and wersh, and didna suit their taste ava, an' they wadna gang the length to partake o't.

A few years prior to this, the early Scottish Congregationalists, or missionaries as they were called, had made Helensburgh a preaching station in summer, and conducted their services, according to the state of the weather, either in or out of doors, without having any ultimate views of founding a permanent church. However, as an almost inevitable result of bringing men and women together to hear the Gospel preached statedly, they banded themselves together, and formed a congregation. The story of its origin is thus told, in an old letter, by Duncan Weir, of Cairndhu, one of its first members :—"In 1799 two men, who had been sent by a society in Glasgow to preach the Gospel in the Highlands, were returning home across

Rosneath Moor, when they met a passenger with whom they entered into conversation, and the party asked where they might find a lodging in Helensburgh. Duncan Weir's house at Cairndhu was recommended to them. There they lodged that night, and spent a profitable evening with Duncan and his family. One of them preached in Helensburgh, and then they left for Glasgow. Next year an application was made to the Rev. Greville Ewing, of Glasgow, to send down some of the young men then studying for the ministry under his training, and the request was complied with. In 1801 the Rev. Mr Ewing himself was prevailed on to pay a visit to the small flock, which had by this time been gathered together, and very shortly afterwards subscriptions were sought to aid in the erection of a place of worship, and with a zeal worthy of all praise, in due time and in the face of many difficulties, the house was finished. It was of the rudest description, without flooring, having, in lieu thereof, a footboard laid on the earth within each pew. In spite of all this exercise of economy, there remained at the completion of the edifice a deficit of £90, which sum was raised on a bill signed by some of the promoters. After the chapel was built, and a congregation gathered, the question arose as "to what denomination they should attach themselves," and this question was long and keenly debated. Some had a preference for the Original Secession, others for the Relief body, and a remainder for Independency. The Independents, however, were in the majority, and after a vote was taken it was resolved that they should be in connection with that body. Unanimity was then at end, the adherents of the other systems, as might have been expected, declared off, and desired back their subscriptions;

but after taking legal advice they found that this could not be attained. One of them, a Mr M'——, however, held the £90 bill, and with this weapon expected to secure the building for his party. "We expected," says Weir, "they would renew the bill for six months longer. They would do no such thing. If that bill was not met on the day it was due the house was theirs. Of this they had no doubt. Well, the bill became due. Some good friends, hearing of the case, launched out the money, but they counselled secrecy, so as not to let the billholder know how matters stood till the day came round. So, when the day came a certain man was sent to Mr M'——'s house with the money. When he arrived at the house, there were several there waiting the result, and to their astonishment, after a little parleying, the bill was paid, and so their game miscarried. Mr M'—— was one of our greatest friends for two years, and in the end turned our greatest enemy. These trials were nearly over when Mr Syme (the first pastor) came, and we were happy they were so."

I cannot be certain as to who were the first members of this small church, on account of the early records thereof having been lost, but they had the reputation of being very zealous. "Our early recollections," says an old acquaintance, "of the building itself is that it stood in the middle of a field, where a number of sheep grazed in summer, which afforded us youngsters, who were within the walls on Sundays, as we looked out at them through the old-fashioned windows, more suitable illustrations of the restoration of the wanderer of the flock, and of innocence and pastoral life, than what the 'secondly' or 'thirdly' of the discourse often gave us. In wet weather the approach to the building was somewhat critical, for the ground was

moosy and undrained, and a row of stepping-stones led across the line of the then unformed street near which it stood, and these stepping-stones were by no means reliable to those who were not to the manner born. Inside, the building was bleak and bare, seated with high, stiff pews, all overlooked by an enormous pulpit with a wooden canopy. A great stove filled up one corner of the house—a well-remembered stove, the neighbourhood of which was coveted by us youngsters on wet or cold days, but which was sacred to some old folk, who used to sit and crack round it during the gathering of the congregation, as they did also in the interval between sermons. Our recollections of these worthies carry us back to a few well-remembered faces, notably old William Service and Duncan MacRae amongst the brethren; and Mary Guy and Mrs Bain amongst the sisters." So much for our old friend's memoranda.

For the first few years under the Rev. Mr Syme's ministry, followed by that of Mr Edwards (1809), the infant church seems to have flourished. Both of these, however, were in turn called to other spheres of labour. Then followed the ministry of the Rev. Mr Boag, but from 1816 to 1822 there does not seem to have been any regular settled pastor over the flock. As an almost inevitable result the membership of the church dwindled away, until it was reduced to a mere handful—only five males and seven females were left. About this date, when matters had reached such a grave crisis, the Rev. John Arthur, then a student in Glasgow, received an invitation to become pastor, and after some not unnatural hesitation, he accepted, and was ordained to the charge in 1824.

Some years after he entered on his labours, the congre-

gation so much increased that the building was found to be incapable of affording the necessary accommodation, and a gallery was added to it, the extremity of which approached so near the enormous pulpit that a sitter on the front thereof might have shaken hands with the minister.

The laddies, doubtless, on hot Sundays, longing for the green fields and fresh air outside, envied the sitters in the front, knowing that they had within view the quantity of paper to be traversed by the minister before—"And finally, my brethren" was reached.

Mr Brash, sen., clothier, was for many years precentor of this chapel, and one Sunday a well-known character put in an appearance, well primed with usquebagh, and after the first psalm was given out, he rose up and said—"Brash, gie us 'Kilmarnock' tae that ane; it'll rin tilt glorious."

This old chapel was removed in 1851, and many pleasant and some sad memories were intimately associated with the unlovely, but not therefore uninteresting, edifice. It will soon cease to exist even in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant. The Rev. Mr Arthur, in this year of grace 1883, is still alive and able to move about.

The new Congregational Chapel stands almost on the same site as its predecessor did. This building is in the early English style of architecture, and its accommodation was ample enough when it first saw the light in 1851 for the demands made on it, but it is now insufficient, and a new, much larger, and finer building is being erected to the eastward of it for the congregation. When it is finished the present chapel will be utilized as a hall for classes and meetings in connection with the body. The Rev. Mr Arthur resigned the charge of the congregation

in 1866, on account of the infirmities of age besetting him, and was succeeded by the Rev. William Milne, who, after a brief ministry of three years, was obliged to resign the pastorate on account of ill-health, and the Rev. James Troup, M.A., the present incumbent, was chosen as his successor in 1869.

The first Sabbath Schools in the town were begun in connection with this chapel—a distinguished honour.

The other old Helensburgh chapel which falls now to be commented on is

#### THE OLD LIGHT BURGHER KIRK.

About 1824-25, when the population of the town might be about 800, it is not easy to state it with more certainty, a handful of Original Seceders from the Church of Scotland met for worship in the Granary, and associated with them were a number of nominal adherents of the Established Church. After the lapse of a year or two the worshippers had so increased as to render the acquisition of more comfortable quarters desirable. With a good deal of self-denial the flock contributed what must be considered a goodly sum, and it, along with donations from outsiders, was devoted to the erection of a church in the centre of the town, the site now forming part of Colquhoun Square. This church, like the Tabernacle, was about as ugly and repulsive an ecclesiastical edifice as one could see in broad Scotland. At that time the Scotch religious mind, especially of the dissenting type, associated the external or internal adornment of the House of God as falling under the sin of idolatry and savouring of Popery and Prelacy, indulging in the same feelings as those cherished by a small, but devout and honest, section of the religious people of the present day in regard to the using of instrumental

music in the service of God. Amongst the most faithful and indefatigable supporters of the new church was Mr James Breingan, long an esteemed merchant in Helensburgh, and a leading man in both civil and ecclesiastical matters, and Mr Henry Colquhoun, one of the earliest townsmen of any note.

In 1827 the congregation then formed gave a call to Mr John Anderson, then newly licensed to preach the Gospel, who accepted, was ordained, and continued minister of the charge till his death in 1867. Mr Anderson soon established his reputation as a notable preacher, which was not confined to the district but extended over the country at large. Not long after the start of his ministry the great Voluntary Controversy raged in Scotland. Mr Anderson, though practically a Voluntary, yet theoretically he firmly held to the principle of the lawfulness and expediency of Church establishments, and during the controversy took an active part on that side of the question. It was not, therefore, surprising when the Veto Act of 1834 passed that the desire to return to the Church from which they had seceded on the ground of patronage only, should find a lodgement in the minds of the seceders. Their only objection to the State Church had been removed, and the fond dream of a great and pure national establishment of religion again captivated this section of the protesting outsiders. Accordingly, the Rev. Mr Anderson and the whole of his congregation joined in 1839 the ranks of the Church of Scotland, and remained in connection with it until the leaving of the Free Church in 1843, when they again seceded. The Establishment had not turned out to be to them the "free, faithful, and reforming Church" of their hope and desire. But for all that the establishment theory

was not abandoned. It was inherited and traditional, and assuredly believed to be based on Scripture truth and testimony.

With these points, however, we have little concern here. They are minor and unimportant compared with the fact that the Rev. Mr Anderson was a zealous, faithful, and gifted preacher of the Gospel, whose great aim was to win souls. He was, in addition, a man of very extensive reading and wide literary sympathies. What leisure hours he had at his disposal were spent in literary pursuits. A number of volumes, prose and poetic, issued from his pen ; amongst the principal of which were *Stories of the Church of Scotland*, *Wanderings in the Land of Israel*, *Lays of the Kirk and Covenant*, *Patrick Wellwood*, and a collection of fugitive poems, the title of which I do not remember. Some of his short poems had the genuine ring about them of the true metal, and had he cultivated the poetic gift more he would doubtless have occupied a high position among the minor bards of Scotland. As a writer he was, although somewhat discursive, always interesting, clear and correct in style, and graphic in description. As a preacher he was simple, plain, and direct, abundant and ready in quotation, with a tendency to soar betimes into the sublime region of poetry. His sermons were in merit unequal, but this was more frequently attributable to periods of ill health than to any want of preparation on the part of the preacher. He did not excel in controversial teaching, and was not partial to it, realising that religion was more a thing of heart than head ; he dealt in a fresh, vigorous, and earnest manner with the claims which the Gospel and the duties of the Christian life had upon man's acceptance. He was never cold or unsympathetic. This was not his nature. Whatever his



theme was he warmed to it, and carried his audience along with him. He had a happy facility of seizing current topics to illustrate any point in his discourses, so as to make them tell with greater effect. Endowed as I have noticed with the poetic faculty, and delighting in such subjects as the love and care of Christ for His Church, it was not surprising that the Song of Solomon was to him a frequent text-book, and the imagery of that Song an exhaustless mine of wealth. Many of his best discourses—sermons which even yet linger in the memories of his hearers—were indebted to that source for their inspiration. Being a copious reader of profitable books, and having a very retentive memory, he could readily avail himself of materials, which in many other hands would only have been so much useless lumber. In his latter days he became more earnest and pointed in application, and divesting himself of a tendency to over-much heaping up of illustrations, he subordinated his poetic temperament to the practical part of his nature, and pressed more earnestly home on his hearers the claims of the Gospel. His sermons were now more directed to the awakening of sinners, and, as might have been expected his ministry became more fruitful in results. He took a deep interest in revival work, and laboured incessantly in furthering it during the last years of his life.

In personal appearance he was an attractive-looking man; tall and dark, with a frank, open, and somewhat jaunty manner, which combined with an unflagging cheerfulness, and great conversational gifts, won the love and confidence of old and young, and secured for him a warm welcome in every house. Added to these he was absolutely indifferent to the pecuniary power or position of any member of his congregation. Personally he was utterly unselfish in all

money matters, his pocket as soon as filled being emptied by some real or spurious claimant on his kindness; and consequently he failed to recognise any money power in the church as being worthy of honour for its own sake. May his memory long remain green in Helensburgh.

The barn-like old kirk in which he first ministered, and which was dear to so many, has long been superseded by a handsome Gothic erection, with a graceful spire, one of the not too many architectural ornaments of the burgh. A recent visit to it not only revived old associations, but brought the form of worship of to-day in forcible contrast with that of forty or even five and twenty years ago. More especially was this noticeable in the psalmody. Formerly it was simply execrable, and held an all too insignificant place in the worship of Almighty God. The congregation took no interest in it. Musical taste was not cultivated, and of musical knowledge there was scarcely any. If a man could be got cheap who was so sufficiently master of a few tunes as to enable him to drawl them out from the precentor's bench, he was relegated to the office of leader of psalmody, and the congregation howled after him as they best might, sometimes a considerable distance behind. Nor was it material whether they followed or not if the tune was new to them, in which case it was sometimes sung as a solo. An acquaintance told me he was present on one occasion when the customary leader of song was absent, and a stranger vainly endeavoured to fill his place, when the following scene occurred:—"The psalm was given out, the stranger in the bench struck up a tune, apparently new, for after going to the end of the second line no one joined. The precentor stopped and muttered audibly, "That won't do," and started anew a second time

with like success, muttering, "We'll try another," and made a third ineffectual effort. Turning his face up to the minister, he then said aloud, "I'm afraid, sir, it'll no do at all!" and descended to the body of the church. The effect on the congregation it would be difficult to describe.

Whether this be a genuine story or merely a fabrication there is one thing certain that this congregation has now grudged no expense in securing for itself the best musical training, having gone in for the cultivation of this science in the most hearty manner, achieving results most creditable and exemplary, the service of praise being now invested with due importance.

In 1863 the Rev. John Anderson, on account of failure of health, solicited and received a colleague and successor in the person of the Rev. Alexander Anderson, of Markinch, who became sole minister in 1867, and discharged the duties thereof so satisfactorily down to 1882, when he demitted them to retire to private life in Edinburgh, that his congregation presented him with a very valuable solid silver tea equipage. After a short vacancy, the Rev. Mr Leitch, B.A., present incumbent, was heartily chosen to fill the vacancy, so that the old church is once more fully equipped.





### Section III.

*THE PROVOSTS, LORDS OF THE MANOR, &c.*

#### CHAPTER XII.

LIST OF THE WHOLE OF THE PROVOSTS OF THE BURGH OF  
HELENSBURGH DOWN TO 1883.

- 1807-10. Henry Bell.
- 1810-28. Jacob Dixon.
- 1828-34. James Smith of Jordan Hill.
- 1834-5. James Bain.
- 1835-6. John M'Farlane.
- 1836-7. Richard Kidston.
- 1837-9. James Breingan.
- 1839-40. James Bain.
- 1840-9. Richard Kidston.
- 1849-53. Peter Walker.
- 1853-4. James Smith of Jordan Hill.
- 1854-7. William Brown.
- 1857-63. William Drysdale.
- 1863-9. Alexander Breingan.
- 1869-77. Thomas Steven.
- 1877. John Stuart, present Provost.

## NOTICES OF THE FOREGOING.

**N**OW give a sketch of the lives of the foregoing Provosts of the burgh of Helensburgh, the first of whom was

## HENRY BELL.

Helensburgh and Henry Bell can never be disassociated; the memory of the one is inseparably linked with the history of the other. Helensburgh does not claim him as a son, for he was born in Linlithgow in 1766, but his life was nearly all spent here, and the great dream of that life was realised here. He might have been about thirty years old when he first came to Helensburgh. By that time his fertile brain was filled with those projects of steam navigation which to-day sees the abundant fulfilment of. From 1800 down to the year of his death in 1830, his life was one of restless activity—ship-building, house-building, and originating schemes for one thing or another; he could not be idle. The world knows already the story of the "Comet;" it has been told in biography by various authors, and in fiction by John Galt. We need not again rehearse it. It is often assumed that the historical "Comet" was built at Helensburgh. This, however, was not the case. The honour of being the first steamboat builders on the Clyde belongs to the firm of John Wood & Co., of Port-Glasgow, who constructed the hull of this pioneer of steamships in 1811. She was in 1818 lengthened and altered in some respects at Helensburgh.

Bell's life is the old story of inventive genius struggling against difficulties with inadequate resources, and with, what was even harder to bear, the outspoken incredulity and disbelief of man. It is the old story of eager, unquenchable resolution, refusing to be turned aside by the sneer of



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow.

*Henry Bell*



ignorance or adverse verdict of public opinion, but having grasped a great truth, undauntedly striving to demonstrate it, and seeing it after many a failure crowned with triumphant success. We need not now speak of all this, but a few recollections of Bell himself, as he was and lived, may be more interesting.

As most of those who have seen his picture—reproduced from a cast of his features—may readily infer, he had a good-looking, shrewd countenance—the face of an honest though somewhat positive Scot—sharp featured, with high cheek bones, and a clear grey eye. Latterly his face wore a shadow of care or anxiety in repose, which passed away when animated by conversation, and, especially if the topic was a favourite one, it melted into sunshine. His speech was quick and pointed, and he had a restless activity of manner in work, which made things not always pleasant for men under him, especially if they were lethargic of movement. He was always happiest when he had a number of men in full work, no matter what they were engaged in; and for some years he generally had from fifteen to twenty occupied in one or other of his projects. But the amount of work performed was seldom corresponding to the number of hands, for the inherent desire he possessed to make experiments frequently led to work being spoiled, and a necessity for either undoing it or doing it in a different form. This was peculiarly irritating to young workmen, who were often tempted to throw down their tools and leave his employment, and sometimes a good deal of diplomacy had to be exercised to retain useful and handy men in his service. He possessed a keen discrimination of character, and was seldom at fault. A workman who was quick to catch his ideas and carry them out, and who could



be trusted, was sure to win his favour and friendship, and ever afterwards Bell was ready to give him a helping hand. Even now the few surviving men who were with him in their youth speak of him with the warmest respect, and seem to have been linked to him by a stronger tie than usually binds employers and employed.

He was a child in the matter of money. Nothing delighted him more than to have his pockets full, not for its own sake, but solely that he might pay it away right and left. Well his men knew on a pay Saturday by the first glimpse of him whether he was in funds or not. If his purse was full he invariably whistled softly over the first two lines of "Logie o' Buchan," the one tune he was fairly master of. "There was a full head o' steam on," said one of his former men, "when the well-known stave was whistled; we were sure o' oor money." Bell's first desire was to get rid of it. It made him supremely happy to distribute it, and this he did as quickly as possible. Often to the annoyance and sore inconvenience of his worthy wife, who managed the hotel, and needed a share of it, was it discovered, when her claim was presented, that every penny was gone. And she had too much sense to scold, whatever she felt.

He originated amongst other schemes one for the erection of markets in the town, and had very elaborate plans of these prepared, and which, we believe, are yet in existence, in possession of Mr Robert Taylor, surveyor, who was for many years his right hand man. One of the plans of the burgh shows ground allotted for these markets in apparent conformity with his idea. Perhaps the day is not distant when the design may be executed, as has been another of his by the introduction of water from Glenfruin

half a century after it was propounded. He had carefully surveyed the ground and pipe tracts, and taken levels and measurements. The plan involved the construction of a large reservoir on Kilbride Farm at a spot affording great natural facilities for such a work. One summer day, accompanied by a band of workmen, with chains, poles, flags, and spades, he appeared on the farm, and staked off the site of a proposed reservoir. The whole agricultural population of the glen turned out. They had a vague idea that Bell was uncanny, and curiosity led them to inspect the proceedings. M'Farlane of Darling, the patriarch of the glen, demanded explanations, got them, and then remonstrated, on the ground that his meadow land, which was the best of his farm, would be put under water. "Precisely so," replied Bell, "but d'ye no ken that an acre of water's worth twa o' land. We'll droon the meadow, aye, an' I think ye'll see it far beyond that, for I intend it should rise nearly to the level o' your hearthstane." But there was a twinkle in his eye, indicating that he was quietly enjoying the fun of dismaying the honest farmer with dire forbodings of the safety of crop and household. From the proposed reservoir the pipes were to have been led by the Drumfork Road, thence across Luss Road, and down the lands of Kirk-michael to the town.

Bell, though a quick-tempered man, was not easily provoked to anger; but when provoked, as he sometimes was, by sheer stupidity, but oftener by the contempt and insolence of ignorance, his retort was ready and sharp. An American, sometime lodging in the town, used frequently to visit him, and took an inquisitive interest in his work, but generally expressed himself in a cool, contemptuous manner, peculiarly aggravating. This gentleman had, in consequence

of his wife succeeding to some money, given up his own business, and was living in comfort on his wife's means. One day, when he had made himself particularly obnoxious to Bell by his dictatorial and overbearing remarks, the former turned round and said, "Man, you're worse than an infidel." "What do you mean, sir?" asked the American. "I just mean what the Bible means, when it says, 'He that provideth not for his own household is worse than an infidel.' Now, you don't provide for your own family—they provide for you. Get along with you, I've nae patience with such poor-souled creatures." As there was a considerable audience enjoying the scene, and a reply was not readily forthcoming, it may be imagined that the troublesome visitor thenceforth kept wide of Bell and his work.

Any man to succeed in life must have faith in himself and faith in his work. Bell had both. He was an enthusiast in science as applied to steam navigation, and like all enthusiasts was always ready to discuss his projects to any willing ear. Nothing, in fact, delighted him more than a good and appreciative listener, to whom he could pour out the whole story of his great discoveries and dreams of the future, and it was a great treat to spend an evening with him, listening to his varied experiences and hopes for the coming time. Once fairly launched there was no halt; he went on and on regardless of time.

On one occasion a young minister from a distance, who had been engaged to preach at Helensburgh, having taken up his quarters at "The Baths," and feeling interested in Bell and his work, got into conversation with him on Saturday night, thinking to wile away an hour before settling down to preparation for the next day's labour. Bell's work was over for the week, and he was only too delighted;

but the crack needed just a beginning. At first it was deeply interesting, but as the evening wore on the minister's mind turned anxiously to his sermons for the morrow, for he was but a beginner, and by-and-bye he longed for the end. No end, however, was in view. Like the Ancient Mariner, Bell spell-bound him with his talk. Nine, ten, eleven, twelve o'clock passed, and still the story was untold—the minister meanwhile lacking courage to break off, and suffering acute torture in the thought of imperfectly mastered discourses, till at last sleep overcame him, and he was obliged to retire with the resolution of an early hour's work on Sabbath morn to make up for the neglected Saturday. Alas! however, the Sunday morning was far advanced before he woke, and he had to take his stand in the pulpit in what he described afterwards as the most miserable state of mind and body any young man could endure, with an imperfectly remembered sermon to deliver to a congregation, for as yet read sermons were not permitted. The pain of that day's trial was felt long after the day was done. Moral—Have your work first done before you begin your enjoyment.

Henry Bell used betimes to go into my brother Donald's joint tailoring and dram shop to have a crack with him. The performances of the "Comet" steamer being with them one day the theme of conversation, my brother said as a fitting wind up thereto, "Man, Mr Bell ye're a desperate clever chiel, that boat o' yours is just a perfect world's wonder." To which the ardent-minded projector replied, "Danney, tak' my word for it this is only the beginning of the uses that steam engines will be put to in the way o' conveyin' passengers; if ye leeve lang ye'll see them fleein' an' bizzin' about on land, wi' croods o' passengers at their tail,

lively as a spittle loupin' along a tailor's het 'goose.' " My brother having only died last year (1882), over ninety years of age, he of a verity did see the day when Henry Bell's prophetic utterance was fulfilled to the letter.

While in his prime, Bell, engaged at some heavy work, had overtaxed himself, fell ill, and the illness resulted in a weakness in one of his legs. This leg for many years troubled him, and gave him a slight halt in his gait. The doctor assured him that so long as certain symptoms he indicated remained he would enjoy fair health, but whenever these ceased the result would be fatal. Very shortly before his death he called in an old friend to speak with him. He was then confined to his room, and said, "R——, the doctor's prediction is about to come true, for my leg no longer troubles me." A few day previously there had been some law proceedings threatened against him in regard to a wall or shed he had removed, which a neighbour claimed as his private property, and the matter was in the hands of the Fiscal. "I'm told," he said, "that the 'beadles' are to be up from Dumbarton about the wall job, and will carry some o' ye to Dumbarton, but they'll no get me—I'll be past their power." And, as he said, it fell true, for he was past all human arresting by another day. He passed calmly and resignedly into the great unknown land in the year 1830, leaving his memory for ever embalmed in the annals of our nation's grandest industrial revolution.

Henry Bell was the first Provost of Helensburgh, so far as can be learned from any record in existence. He was elected in 1807, and continued in office till 1810. By permission of the authorities, I am enabled to give the following list of office-bearers of the then infant burgh:—Henry Bell, Provost; Robert M'Hutcheson and Thomas Craig,

Bailies ; Daniel Colquhoun, Donald M'Farlan, John Bramander, and Charles Colquhoun, Councillors ; John Gray, Town Clerk ; Robert Colquhoun, Depute-Clerk.

THE FUNERAL OF HENRY BELL

was an event of no ordinary nature in the burgh. It took place on Friday, November 19th, 1830. The day was wet and stormy. The company of mourners began to assemble in the Baths Hotel at 11 o'clock, when a religious service was engaged in some time thereafter. At one o'clock the funeral cortege got under way. The hearse was followed by a number of coaches, private and other, containing the friends and near relatives of the deceased. There were about 140 persons present, and amongst the number were the Right Hon. Lord John Campbell, father of the present Duke of Argyll ; James Smith, Esq., of Jordanhill ; Claud Neilson, Esq. ; Archibald M'Lauchlan, Esq. ; Adam Monteith, Esq., of Rockbank ; Major Brown, John Craig, Esq. ; Bailie Hood, Mr A. Brown, Mr Edward Morris, Dr James Stevenson, Rev. Mr Bruce of Ardoch Cottage Young Gentlemen's Boarding School, Cardross, who had been very attentive to the deceased in his last illness ; Rev. Mr Campbell, of Row ; Rev. Mr Anderson, of Helensburgh, a very attached friend of the deceased ; and the Rev. Mr Somerville, of Dumbarton. All along the line of march tokens of the esteem in which the illustrious departed was held were visible ; shops were shut ; vessels of all description within and beyond the reach of vision in the Clyde district exhibited their flags half-mast high. Row, the place of interment, was reached at two o'clock, and all that was mortal of the inventive immortal genius was consigned to the darkness and silence of the tomb. Dust was consigned to dust, and ashes to ashes, but his name and his fame shall

live on throughout the ages. Wherever the grand roll of the names of the benefactors of mankind shall be numbered up, Henry Bell's shall occupy no mean position therein. *R.I.P.*

A freestone obelisk to the memory of Henry Bell was erected after his death at Dunglass, near Bowling, and is familiar to all who have sailed up or down the river Clyde. A stone effigy of him in a sitting posture, and conveying a very good idea of his appearance, was put up, in later years, in Row Churchyard by the late Robert Napier. But it was always a matter of regret that no memorial existed of him in the more immediate field of his labours. The late Sir James Colquhoun, Bart., had long an earnest desire that this should be done, and after more than once endeavouring to enlist public sympathy in the matter his wish was at last carried out. In 1872 a very handsome red granite obelisk was erected in Helensburgh on the sea esplanade at the foot of James Street, having a suitable inscription. It cost a large sum, upwards, I am told, of £800, the greater part of which was contributed by the late Baronet and Mr Napier. It was an undertaking of some risk, owing to the unusual dimensions of the stone, but was successfully carried out. Provost Steven, of Helensburgh, who took a warm interest in the matter, and his then co-adjutors in office, greatly aided the success of its erection.

#### THE FIRST "COMET'S" LAST VOYAGE.

It would in my opinion be time well spent to pen a narrative of the pioneer steamer "Comet's" last voyage and that of her successor, as supplementary to the foregoing, and give the dates when and the places where they met their respective fates, as there still exists, in the public mind, a good deal of misapprehension on the subject. These

are now given from authentic sources. The facts of the case, in regard to the first "Comet," were recently expiscated by Mr Thomas Brash, one of our local literati, from original and undoubted sources, and given to the public through the columns of the *Christian Leader*, and for this service he deserves the thanks of the public. I give the essence of these interspersed with matter from other sources.

The good steamship "Comet," trading between Glasgow and Fort-William, *via* the Crinan Canal, with a crew of seven all told and a salaried piper, left Glasgow at the end of November 1820, and at her destination delivered her goods and passengers on the 4th December safely, despite the mishap which befel her on the voyage in bumping on a half-tide rock which caused her to leak slightly. The return journey was begun on the 7th December, but at Salachan the vessel met with another mishap of such a serious nature as necessitated her being docked, or more probably beached, on the 12th, on which day and the subsequent one a good many men were employed repairing the damage which the craft had sustained. Matters having been made as right as possible, the homeward run was resumed on the 14th. It is certain that the little steamer was at Oban in a somewhat crippled state on the 15th, because the captain's cash book, on that date, shows an expenditure of ten shillings for one night's pumping of the vessel at that port; that would be the evening of the 14th. Leaving Oban on the 15th on her run to Crinan, during a snowstorm of considerable severity, the "Comet" amidst the hurly-burly of rain and wave, and darkness which might be felt, was rendered helpless, and at the Dorus-Mohr was swept by the furious elements on to the jagged point of Craignish, where



she parted amidships shortly thereafter at the parts where she had been lengthened. Henry Bell was on board when she struck, but he and all the crew and passengers were safely landed.

The bill paid for whisky supplied to the parties engaged in the salvage work from the 15th, when she struck, to the 25th, when all hope of saving anything further of importance was abandoned and the vessel left to her fate, was £5 18s 6d, representing a consumpt of  $13\frac{1}{8}$  gallons at the then price of nine shillings per gallon. Verily a good fill up the salvors must have had of the "barley bree" at the breaking up of the historic craft. The after part of the ship soon after the catastrophe had drifted away out into the gulf of Corryvreckan, and the forward part, shortly after Christmas day, slid into deep water and disappeared for ever. It is understood that the engines were saved, and were to a certain extent incorporated with the machinery of her successor, the second "Comet." Several portable articles were also taken out of the vessel. I have in my possession her cabin mirror, three feet by two, which was gifted by Mrs Bell to a valued servant and by her presented to me. It is a very plain article, being silverised crown glass set into a mahogany frame of three divisions, the centre one being largest. I need hardly say that despite its lack of ornamentation, it is for its associations highly valued by its new owner.

It is generally supposed that the

SECOND STEAMER "COMET,"

of 94 tons, built by James Lang of the Dockyard, Dumbarton, in 1821, which had one engine of 25 horse power and a copper boiler weighing 9 tons, furnished by Duncan M'Arthur & Co., of Camlachie, was a vessel in which

Henry Bell had no interest, but such is not the case, for he was the moving spirit in the getting up of it as he was in the matter of the building and equipping of the first of the name. The two vessels being engaged so near in time to each other in the same trade, and called by the same name, and meeting a similar fate, has led to great confusion. I will therefore, in the few subsequent pages, endeavour to complete the redding up of the somewhat involved affair by giving an account of the lamentable end of the second steamship of the cometic name.

THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE SECOND STEAMER "COMET."

The steamship "Comet," Captain M'Innes, master, sailed from Inverness for Glasgow *via* the Caledonian and Crinan Canals on the morning of Tuesday, the 18th of October, 1825, at six o'clock. On the evening of the same day the vessel had reached Fort-William, where she remained for the night. At ten o'clock on Wednesday she resumed her journey, and arrived late the same evening at Crinan, where she again lay until six o'clock on the following morning, when she once more got under weigh, but did not reach Lochgilphead, at the eastern extremity of the canal, until ten o'clock forenoon. Owing to some miscalculation, or detention, it was found that the vessel had not reached that point in time to get water enough to float her out from the mouth of the canal to the open loch, and had to remain until six in the evening before that could be accomplished. What awful destinies were involved in that fatal delay. At the urgent request of some English gentlemen, who were passengers on board of the steamer, the captain somewhat reluctantly touched at Rothesay, and allowed them to disembark there. The cause of his reluctance was that the

wind blew freshly and that he by calling there would have to work up a great deal of lee-way. The vessel after leaving Rothesay shaped a straight course up the Clyde, and the night proving somewhat cold a portion of the passengers endeavoured to get up a comfortable animal heat by dancing on the deck. About midnight the great majority of the travellers went below into the cabins. In the early part of the night there was moonlight, but at twenty minutes to one o'clock the moon dipped beneath the horizon, but, even after that occurred, the darkness was not so great but what the voyagers could see the hills on both sides of the river. Between one and two o'clock the "Comet" was off Kempoch Point, Gourock, and everything was moving satisfactorily, but the displaying of a light had been neglected, and a jib-sail had been set, which precluded anyone but the look-out man from seeing directly ahead, with the consequence that those on deck were startled with the cry of "A steamboat, helm a-port," and almost immediately the vessel was first struck on the bow, and then on the larboard paddle-box.

The vessels drifted asunder, their occupants being filled with the utmost consternation. The devoted crowd on the deck of the "Comet" set up an ear-piercing cry of despair, for they found that their vessel was sinking, and in three minutes after the concussion she went bow foremost down in  $17\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms of water, at about 165 yards from the shore.

The steamer which had been the means of bringing about this heart-rending calamity was the luggage boat "Ayr," a vessel of considerable power, bound to Ayr, having as master, Captain M'Clelland. The "Ayr" had a light displayed, and kept a regular look-out, and the utmost vigilance had been enjoined upon the parties so engaged. After the collision the

people on board of the "Ayr" were as alarmed as were those on board of the "Comet," and became stupified, with the exception of two sailors belonging to the "Harmony," who, with the cool gallant intrepidity of the genuine British sailor, set to the work of launching a boat with a view to the rescuing of the drowning wretches, whose despairing cries for help were filling the midnight air; but, while the boat had just touched the water, and the tackling was yet unloosened, the engines of the "Ayr" began to play, and men and boat were nearly lost. The cause of this was that the "Ayr" was found to be somewhat damaged, and a fear of meeting with a fate similar to that which had just befallen the "Comet" made the cravens in charge run back to Greenock, on the journey passing over the very spot where the "Comet" had been engulfed a few minutes before, and where the faint echoes of the death cries of her devoted passengers and crew still lingered in the air. About seventy of the number were thus lost on Friday, the 21st October, 1825, and only twelve saved.

#### JACOB DIXON OF ROCKBANK

seems to have succeeded Henry Bell in the civic chair. His Provostship extended over 18 years, from 1810 to 1828, but he belongs more to the history of Dumbarton than Helensburgh. He was a member of a distinguished and well-known Dumbarton family; and although one of his residences for a time was here, his business connections and relations were chiefly with the Royal Burgh. His reign as Provost does not seem to have been marked by many memorable events. The Town Council met about twice in the year, and the chief business of their meetings was the appointment of Bailies, and the fining of Bailies and Councillors who declined the honour of official life. The

fine imposed on a Town Councillor was five, and on a Bailie ten shillings. Every absentee at Corporation meetings was fined half-a-crown. The Council in their wisdom, notwithstanding the paucity of official candidates, decided that no man should be twice appointed a Bailie unless he had been three years out of office. Had they in view fines as a source of revenue one naturally wonders when this rule was enacted, or were they afraid of a dangerous monopoly of office? The schoolmaster was not then abroad, for some of the Town Councillors, one at least notably, signed his name with a mark. The Town Council, under the first year of Jacob Dixon's Provostship, consisted of John Swanton and John Moody, Bailies; James Jordan, Dugald M'Lachlan, and Robert Colquhoun, Councillors; Robert Watson, Fiscal; John Gray, Dean of Guild; and Duncan Turner, Clerk.

The chief event of this somewhat lengthened period of office of Provost Dixon was the presentation of a loyal address to His Majesty George IV., on his visit to Scotland in 1822. The address was to have been presented by the Provost, but for some unexplained reason he did not meet His Majesty in Edinburgh. Its receipt, however, was acknowledged by Mr Peel, afterwards Sir Robert Peel, in the most pleasing terms, as having been graciously received by His Majesty. What followed this acknowledgment of the loyalty of the infant burgh, or of the enthusiastic manner in which His Majesty's health was drunk, we cannot say; but, doubtless, enthusiasm was loyally aroused around the Provost's table, for his character was that of an ardent lover of hospitality, spiced with a strong dash of the sportsman. He and Maule of Panmure fought a main of cocks for a thousand guineas in the yard of the Eagle Inn, Max-

well Street, Glasgow ; and he indulged in the same pastime both here and in Dumbarton extensively.

JAMES SMITH OF JORDANHILL.

We come now to another type of man. Mr Smith resided nearly all his life here. He chose it at first as his residence because it afforded him facilities for enjoying yachting, of which he was passionately fond, and in which he was remarkably successful, being the winner of many a cup. Mr Smith's yacht was known everywhere among yachtsmen. His were the best picked men to be found anywhere, and they were justly proud of their skipper. But he did not keep a yacht merely for the renown of taking prizes, but chiefly for the enjoyment of sailing, and the facilities which it placed within reach for pursuing scientific research. He was an accomplished scholar, naturalist, and geologist, as well as a true sailor ; and his contributions to scientific subjects early brought him under the notice of philosophical societies, and deservedly gained him a fellowship in the Royal Society. His *St. Paul's Voyage* was the result of personal research and laborious enquiry. It not only threw much additional light on the Scripture narrative of St Luke, but removed a great many technical objections which previously existed as to the correctness of the inspired narrative, and it now ranks as a standard book of reference. Mr Smith was Provost of Helensburgh in 1828-34, and again in 1853, and did much to advance the interests of the burgh. He was a man of large and liberal means, and had he been supported by men of kindred mind he would have accomplished much more in the way of improvement than what he was able to overtake. He was a man of active temperament and large-hearted impulses, as well as a reliable friend, and a ready supporter of what-

ever approved itself to him as tending to the general good or advancement of science.

JAMES BAIN,

a blood relation of mine, with whom I was at Mr Battison's school here, was born at the Easterton Farm, Helensburgh, about the year 1796. He was the oldest of eight sons born to his father. From his early years James Bain was of a studious habit. I have often seen him poring over his well-worn books in his father's garden, under the shade of a venerable yew tree, which still stands in Glasgow Street at Yew Bank House. He was one of the principal witnesses for the prosecution in the celebrated Row Heresy case, and put the petition of the libellers into proper form. When a young man he entered the Divinity Hall, and studied under Dr M'Gill; but after proceeding a considerable way on his course, he found that he could not accept the Confession of Faith as his confession, and he therefore retired to his native town, and became tutor to the family of Lord John Campbell (father of the present Duke of Argyll), Ardencape, and other families of note.

It was during the nine or ten years which were so spent that the subject of my notice was appointed Provost of the burgh. His first term extended from 1834 to 1835, and his second term of office ran from 1839 to 1840. As far as I recollect, there were no matters of importance carried through or agitating the community during his reign. It was a peaceful one. It was generally understood that the feuars, who were mostly engaged in the active duties of life, elevated him to his high position more on account of his being supposed to be a comparatively idle man, than for his high abilities, which were but lightly taxed in discharging the far from onerous duties then appertaining to the Provostship of the burgh.

He was a member of the Rev. John Anderson's congregation at the time that it was connected with the Establishment, and at that period he once more returned to the Divinity Hall, and passed his examinations with honour. He was then licensed as a preacher of the Gospel by the Presbytery of Dumbarton. When Mr Anderson and his congregation left the Church by law established, so did Mr Bain, and from 1843 we find him connected with the Free Church. In 1844 he received a call from the Free Church congregation of Delting, Shetland, where he laboured with much acceptance down to about the year 1877, when on account of failing health and failing sight he relinquished his charge, and retired with his family to Glasgow, where he died on January 10th, 1879, leaving behind him an odour of sanctity. His widow, a daughter, and two sons survive him. He was a most scrupulously exact, painstaking, conscientious, pious, deeply-learned man; the soul of honour, and guileless as a child.

DR. JOHN M'FARLANE

was Provost of the burgh for one year—1835-6. He was born in Glenorchy, Argyllshire, about the year 1793. In early life he studied medicine and surgery in Glasgow University, from which ancient seat of learning he received his diploma in due course. The Doctor began practising in Old Kilpatrick, and remained there for a short period of time. He afterwards joined an uncle in Brownstown, Jamaica, and there he with great success ministered to bodies diseased for a good many years. Immediately on the emancipation of the slaves in our West Indian Colonies, the Doctor left the island, and settled in non-professional life in Helensburgh and neighbourhood. For a year or two he resided in



the farm steading of Old Torr, and farmed the land adjacent thereto. He resided principally, however, in the burgh, in which he built a residence. In his get-up he was a little peculiar, sporting, as he did, a huge straw hat of West Indian manufacture, which caused the "gamins" of the town, true to their instinct, to dub him "Dr Droll Hat." The Doctor's next move was to Texas, U.S., America, where he died about the year 1853 in his 63d year. As a professional man his abilities ranked high. As a Provost he was painstaking and intelligent, conducting the not too momentous affairs of the burgh in a highly creditable manner.

RICHARD KIDSTON.

Few business men in Glasgow were better known than Mr Kidston. Plain in his attire, unostentatious in his habits, large-hearted and zealous in every good work, he was for far more than a quarter of a century a leading man in this Coast town. He was Provost in 1836-7, and again from 1840 to 1849. The latter years of his occupancy of the seat of the chief ruler was perhaps the stormiest time in the political history of Helensburgh, for the vexed question of a new pier dragged its weary length through successive Town Councils. An Act had been obtained in 1846, authorising the Local Authority to erect a pier and levy rates on it in repayment of the expense incurred. But an unfortunate agreement had been made with the promoters of the Caledonian and Dumbartonshire Railway, by which they, in consideration of certain privileges to be granted, undertook to advance money to build the pier. The line was not at that time completed ; but an ill-advised litigation was raised by the Council against the Company, to compel their implementing of the bargain, which, after years of

delay, was decided against the Council. Various attempts at arrangement and compromise were made by Mr Kidston, and would have been successful but for the litigious inclination of his colleagues. They would neither accept the common sense view of the matter and build the pier after they had Parliamentary powers, nor would they compromise their claims, but they wrangled continually over this unhappy subject.

Mr Kidston's temper was sorely tried, but no one ever heard him utter a vindictive expression against an opponent, however bitterly he was assailed. He possessed an equanimity of temper and a measure of patience rarely equalled, and under all circumstances acted with calmness and dignity. He possessed peculiar aptitude for business, was clear-sighted, and decided in action, quite remarkable in a man so quiet and unassuming in his general habit. He walled in the ground now known as the East End Park, and laid it out. The park which extends to four acres and thirty-four poles, was conveyed on the 7th March, 1862, by the late Sir James Colquhoun, as a gift to the Town Council, for behoof of the inhabitants, at a nominal feu-duty of 5s. per annum. The consideration set forth in the feu-charter being "That a public park would promote the comfort and morality of the working classes." Mr Kidston was a zealous supporter of the Free Church, and it was very much through his liberality that the Park Free Church and manse were erected in 1862.

**JAMES BREINGAN.**

Mr Breingan was not a native, for he belonged to Tilli-coultry, but his name was a tower of strength for many years. He was Postmaster as well as Provost of the burgh, in 1836-9, but the least of his duties were comprised in these

offices, although they were onerous and extensive. Nothing happened of any importance in the burgh but his advice was sought in connection with it. He was arbitrator in many a quarrel, adviser in many a difficulty, and if Mr Breingan could not "redd up" matters the Helensburghians believed that matters could not be redd up at all. He had the implicit confidence of all classes, and never failed to deserve it. Shrewd and far-seeing, his counsel was not only readily sought but often very valuable, and if it be added that he was a true friend to many a one who needed a helping hand, and was always liberal to the distressed, you have his portrait sketched in black and white. He occupied more the position of patriarch of a tribe than that of civil magistrate. There is a story told of Mr Breingan, so characteristic of the man that we do not hesitate to reproduce it. A minister whom he knew slightly called on him one day, begging a subscription towards the erection of a new place of worship. He expatiated very largely on the discomfort and inconvenience of the place where the congregation had long assembled, and ended by saying, "If we had a handsome new building the congregation would be immensely strengthened—more than doubled in fact." "I doubt," replied Mr Breingan, "it's no the shop window that keeps the customers, but the goods in the shop; but for all that I'll give you a subscription, and look you to the quality of the goods." As a religionist he was a zealously-attached member of the local Old Light Burgher Church, which afterwards merged into the Establishment and then into the Free Church. He not only contributed largely to the advancement of that church's interests, but ungrudgingly gave his personal services on every occasion when necessity arose for the proper utilizing of the same.

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**PETER WALKER**

was elected to office in September 1850, having been a good many years previously a member of the Town Council. He remained in office till September 1853. During this period very few public improvements of any note were carried out. It was, in fact, an uneventful period in the history of the burgh. The attention of the Council was chiefly directed to the opening up of new streets and construction of drains. All this was very necessary in a growing place, and it involved a good deal of personal trouble and superintendence. There was, however, a great deal of municipal excitement connected with the correspondence and subsequent litigation with the Caledonian and Dumbartonshire Railway Company. The interim directors of that Company, in contemplation of their line being carried to Helensburgh, had entered in 1848 into an agreement with the Town Council to erect a pier and lay rails on it. The plan of the pier shewed it to be a very handsome and substantial work, and a Harbour Act had been obtained by the Council as Harbour Trustees, authorising the borrowing of money and levying of dues on the new pier. The Company did not carry out their line, but the Town Council as Harbour Trust endeavoured hard to levy dues on the old pier; in which they were defeated, and tried to enforce the obligations of the agreement against the Railway Company, in which they were also defeated on appeal to the House of Lords. During a good many years the new pier remained unbuilt, and the powers of the Act a dead letter. Mr Walker took a deep interest in the litigation, for which he received the thanks of the community, as shown by the presentation to him of a very beautiful painting of Helensburgh. He died December 31st, 1874.

**WILLIAM BROWN**

succeeded Mr Peter Walker in the office of Chief Magistrate in 1853. He had some years previously retired from business as a writer in Glasgow, where he had long enjoyed a very extensive practice. He was a painstaking and judicious Provost, erring if anything on the side of caution. Under his sway the Corporation business went on very smoothly, and though no great project was devised or carried out, the general work of the town was successfully and prudently managed. By this time the burgh began to make decided progress. The value of property increased considerably, and Helensburgh was rapidly coming into favour. There was consequently a good deal of municipal labour, and with the very limited powers conferred by the local Police Act then in force, it was no easy task to meet the exigences of the growing town, but Mr Brown applied himself heartily to the work and so far as it was practicable carried out such schemes as were necessary for public comfort and indispensable to public convenience. His retirement was a great loss to the Council, who profited by his judicious counsels in many ways. He died 10th April, 1866.

**WILLIAM DRYSDALE.**

This worthy Provost's reign extended from 1857 to 1863. Mr Drysdale was a native of Tillicoultry, where he received a sound general education. He was born in 1807. At an early age he went to Stirling to assist in a grocery store; but his health failed there, and after a short interval he was apprenticed to Mr Beveridge, a cloth merchant in Alloa. In 1829 he removed to Glasgow, and for the first fifteen years was in the employment of John McIntyre & Co., at the Cross. He then started in business on his own account in company with his brother and Mr John Wilson, under

the firm of Drysdale & Wilson. Under his unremitting diligence and integrity the business thrived, so that in a few years he was in easy circumstances; and by the time he retired in 1857 he had acquired a competency. But he was not known in Glasgow merely as a business man. He was better known as one in the front rank in all religious and charitable movements. His diligence and earnestness in Christian work were equally marked with his enterprise as a merchant, and he was early recognised as a leading man in the United Presbyterian body, with which, from his early youth, he was connected. While in Glasgow he filled the office of elder in the congregation under the late Dr Heugh, and afterwards under Dr Jas. Taylor for a long term of years. In Sunday School work especially he always took an active and energetic part, and did very much to promote its interests.

In 1857 he came to Helensburgh, having practically retired from business. But here he could not be idle. From the very first he took up the position which he held to the last—a leader in all matters, religious, political, and social. His merits were very soon discovered, and the people of Helensburgh were not slow to avail themselves of his services, which were always ungrudgingly given. He was elected a member of the Town Council shortly after he settled here, appointed a Bailie, and then unanimously elected Provost. The civic chair he filled to universal satisfaction, and during his period of office many improvements were carried through. As a magistrate he was shrewd, judicious, and decided. He governed with remarkable tact; without self-assertion or demonstrativeness, and he almost invariably carried his point, for he possessed not only business habits, but what was of higher moment—without which neither

education nor position can achieve much—he had a knowledge of men. This he possessed in an eminent degree, and it stood him in good stead often in troublous times. As a chairman of a public meeting few could excel him. He could keep thoroughly under control an assembly ready to break into uproar, and by good humour and tact get the business fairly carried out. Such was the appreciation in which his services were recognised that towards the close of his reign of six years as Provost a public testimonial was presented to him. This took place on the 15th January, 1864, at a public banquet in the Queen's Hotel, Sir James Colquhoun, Bart., occupying the chair, and Captain Dennistoun of Golfhill acting as croupier. The presentation consisted of a characteristic admirably executed portrait of the Provost, an exceedingly valuable timepiece, &c.

But it was not in his political position alone that Helensburgh was indebted to him, and has to mourn his loss; he was open-handed in every good work. Animated by no party or sectarian spirit, it was enough that any object appealed to our common humanity to secure his aid. He not only gave liberally to religious and charitable purposes, but he gave his time and influence most willingly to promote them. Indeed it may be said there was no religious, charitable, or educational scheme promoted or supported in the place during the past twenty years with which the name of William Drysdale was not associated. About the time he came to Helensburgh a branch of the Union Bank of Scotland was opened, of which he was appointed agent. This position he held till within six months of his death. He made a business for the bank in this district, and left it after years of honourable service, followed by the best wishes of the directors.



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow.

*Ch. Stuart*





The United Presbyterian Church here was deeply indebted to him. Of it he was one of the most active office-bearers, and took the deepest interest in its prosperity. To him, more than to any one else in the district, was the advancement of everything connected with the denomination a matter of earnest desire and study.

Mr Drysdale's place was not easily filled. Not only as a public man, but as a private citizen, his loss was mourned. He was a sincere friend to many, an honest and conscientious adviser and steady helper in time of trouble. Unassuming in his manner, unpretentious in his life, he won the respect of his fellows, while his consistent piety was the highest ornament of an unblemished character. He was early married, and survived the partner of his joys and trials only two years, having died on December 10th, 1880.

PROVOST ALEXANDER BREINGAN

has twice filled the chair of honour. In 1863 he was chosen, and again in 1866 he was re-elected to office. He is yet a young man comparatively, and may again be called to fill the Chief Magistrate's chair, for there has been no man so popular and so universal a favourite in the burgh, either in or out of office as Provost Breingan. His life has been a busy one, and his energies have been directed to the welfare of the burgh of which he is a native. Its interests have always been the first consideration with him, and he has grudged neither time, money, nor energies in promoting its welfare. He has withal a happy knack of enlisting popular sympathy for his undertakings, and what he sets his hand to he generally succeeds with. He clearly saw the advantages which the burgh would derive by the adoption of the General Police Act of 1862, especially in

the view of providing a better system of management than was possible under the local Police Act, and carried the adoption of the necessary powers. He then formulated a scheme for introduction of water by gravitation, which after very annoying differences and opposition was successfully carried, and the supply of water introduced in the spring of 1868. Improvements were afterwards carried out on this scheme, and a more permanent and reliable source of supply found in the hills of Glenfruin ; but the honour of introducing this necessary into the burgh on a systematic plan belongs to Provost Breingan. In addition to his civic duties, Provost Breingan has taken a zealous part in the Volunteer movement. He was one of the earliest members of the county force, and has worked indefatigably in promoting the efficiency of the company to which he has been attached.

In the agricultural affairs of the district he has always taken a deep interest. His knowledge of farm produce is so generally recognised and trusted that he usually figures as one of the judges in all the neighbouring agricultural shows. In connection with the Poor Law administration, educational matters, as well as political life, Mr. Breingan has held a prominent position. He has been twice elected to the office of chairman of the School Board of Row, and has sought to promote the interests of education not alone by giving his time to the duties of chairman, but by his money in founding bursaries for diligent scholars. It would be too long a task, however, to enlarge on the multitudinous labour in official duty and philanthropy of ex-*Provost* Breingan. He and Helensburgh are inseparably linked together, and its history would be incomplete without his. In the year 1870, on the 27th January, the inhabitants

of Helensburgh, as a token of the high esteem in which Provost Breingan was held by them, presented him with an epergne, on which the following inscription is engraved:—"This epergne, with a pair of fruit stands, a coffee tray, and a set of flower stands, was presented to Alexander Breingan, Esq., on his retiring from the office of Chief Magistrate of Helensburgh, as a public testimony of respect and esteem for him as a private gentleman, and of high appreciation of his public services to the burgh while in office, from September, 1863, till September, 1869.—Helensburgh, 21st January, 1870." The presentation was made at a dinner in the Queen's Hotel, when upwards of one hundred gentlemen were present. The late James Stirling, Esq., of Rockend, was chairman, and Provost Steven acted as croupier.

THOMAS STEVEN

succeeded Mr Breingan in office in 1869, and occupied the Chief Magistrate's chair with dignity and honour during the term of his office. His colleagues would have been glad of a continuation of his services, which were highly esteemed, for added to shrewd business tact, he was ungrudging of personal effort and expense in forwarding the good of the burgh. Various important improvements were carried out under his presidency, and the town was more indebted to him than it has been fully aware of. These were an improved system of drainage of the town, which is now being enlarged, the appointment of a sanitary inspector, the opening of an hospital in Maitland Street, and the subsequent erection of the handsome hospital at the east end, which has proved a very great boon to the community. Under Mr Steven the town water supply was also greatly improved by the addition of the

Ballyvoulin stream being secured as a source. This alone involved great personal attention and negotiation. The works were finally completed in July, 1875. Under Provost Steven the whole powers and provisions of the General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act of 1862 were adopted without opposition, and he was elected the first Chief Magistrate under that Act in August, 1875. The provisions of the Public Health Act, which had been treated very much as a dead letter, were also more rigorously enforced, to the advantage of general cleanliness, and the improvement of the sanitary condition of the town. An outside demand having arisen for a public hall, Mr Steven was at considerable trouble to secure a site, and have a suitable building erected; but in consequence of a conflict of opinion springing up the matter then fell through, and subsequent revivals of the question have been equally unfortunate. The footways of the burgh, which had been hitherto innocent of kerb or paving were also to a great extent improved in their surfaces, and the boundaries of the burgh extended in July, 1876. Mr Steven was also in place during the time the North British Railway Company sought power to connect their line with the pier at Helensburgh, and advocated the carrying out of this measure at much personal trouble and cost. The Bill was unfortunately successfully opposed, and the result has been injurious to the interests of the town. He also took a very active interest in obtaining amendments on the Roads and Bridges Bill, and along with Mr Cramb and other members of the Commission secured important advantages to the community by that act. Mr Steven, who had filled the chair of the Chief Magistrate during the most important six years of the history of the town, resigned office in September, 1877, to the sincere regret of his coadjutors.

## PROVOST STUART.

John Stuart, our present chief municipal dignitary, who is the son of a master joiner, was born in "Gude Sanct Mungo's Toon" in the year of grace 1831, so that he is not far beyond the sunny portion of life's prime. After imbibing at the well of learning draughts sufficiently copious to enable him to enter the ranks of labour with a fair chance of success, he was, in his fourteenth year, apprenticed to a joiner in "the Second City of the Empire," and in due season he blossomed into a full-blown journeyman, and for a short period of time did a spell of work in that capacity. Being of a susceptible, ardent temperament, he married early a fair daughter of the city, gave hostages to fortune, and was thereby put upon his mettle, having to quit him like a man and be strong in the battle of life, so as wife and bairns might be shielded from misfortune.

In the year 1851, about the period when photography first began to be practised to any great extent in this part of the world, our Provost in embryo became imbued with an unconquerable desire to acquire the wondrous art. While attending Dr Taylor's natural philosophy classes in the Andersonian University he became possessed of a rudimentary knowledge of photography, which was subsequently developed during his attendance at the chemistry classes in the same seat of learning. Having thus gained considerable information on the scientific side of the subject, he, without giving up his ordinary avocation, put himself under tuition on the practical side of the question, and then with his own hands he erected a glass house, made a camera and other necessary articles, and set to work on Saturday afternoons and other odd times as an amateur photographic artist. His first sun picture of roofs and spires in his native city,

taken from his own dwelling-house window by means of an apparatus of his own making, flooded his soul with joy. He had at length reached the portals of the goal of his ambition, and his onward path was suffused with a rosy light. His fame as an exceedingly clever amateur artist soon got noised abroad, and, without his intending it, the current of popularity set in in his favour so strongly that it bore him away for ever from his old wooden pursuits, and landed him, in 1855, among the ranks of professional photographers. Being an enthusiast in whatever he undertakes, he threw the whole energies of his impulsive nature into his new calling, and after a short but sharp struggle he made his mark effectually therein, marching steadily into the front rank of his profession, and maintaining against all comers his hard-earned position, having now one of the best equipped and most prosperous studios in Scotland. In 1858, Mr Stuart took up his permanent residence in Helensburgh, and in 1861 he opened in it a branch establishment, which has all along been favourably known in the West of Scotland for the high-class work turned out by it. From its origin it has been under the efficient management of Mr William Stewart.

Mr Stuart was first returned to the Town Council of this burgh in 1865, and with the exception of one year, from 1876 to 1877, he has been a member of the same ever since (1883). In 1869 he was created Junior Bailie, and in 1870 Senior Bailie, reaching the top of the municipal tree in 1877, when he was chosen Provost. The following schemes have been brought forward, and either passed or rejected in his reign, viz.:—

First in order of time came, in 1878, the erection of the picturesque, pile of municipal buildings in the Scotch

Baronial style of architecture, from designs by Mr Honeyman of Glasgow, at a cost of £4000, being, singular to say, a few pounds below the estimated price. The Council Chamber within the same is quite a gem in its way, and its walls are graced with the portraits of the late and present Sir James Colquhouns, Barts., Lords of the Manor, and a number of the Provosts of the town. The foundation stone of the edifice was laid with Masonic honours by the R. W. Provincial Grand Master, Bro. Alexander Smollett, Esq. of Bonhill. On that occasion, both during the day and evening, the town was *en fete*.

There having been a scare about the state of the shore, which had a few years ago been declared by a local medical man to be in a somewhat objectionable condition, the authorities, with a view, as far as in them lay, to keep the town sanitarily above suspicion, caused the drainage pipes of the burgh to be extended, in 1883, a considerable distance further seaward, and these operations, as far as completed, appear to be answering the purpose desiderated.

In the year 1880 Provost Stuart made a bold push to get the Council to acquire the Gas Works under the provisions of the Gas (Scotland) Act, and put himself to a vast deal of trouble and some little expense in hunting up information in regard to the outcome of such proceedings in other communities which had adopted the Act; but various adverse influences, including the electric light scare, were brought to bear upon the parties who had the destinies of the same in their hands, and the proposal was ultimately withdrawn. Unless there be something very peculiar about this town in the matter of gas supply, it appears to me that the decision arrived at, viewed in the light of the beneficial experience of Dumbarton and various other towns which have adopted



the Act, was a mistake; but possibly I am not sufficiently master of the facts of the case to dogmatise on the matter.

For many years back the Council ever and anon have had cracks about the widening of Clyde Street from William Street west to Suffolk Street, and this year (1883) the scheme was executed as far west as Glasgow Street, and has proved a most marked improvement. It is to be hoped that the project will be before long completed in its entirety, and that the bridge at the West Burn, and ground adjacent thereto, also will be widened. Further, if the Glasgow Street green were extended, as it might be, so as to do away with the ugly bend in the road westward to Ferniegair's gate, then West Clyde Street would be a promenade to be proud of exceedingly.

In 1881, a section of the community took steps with a view to the adoption of the Free Libraries Act. Provost Stuart gave it his support as a man, but did not lead in the matter as a Provost. The scheme was vetoed on the grounds that the rich had libraries of their own, and had also access to adventure ones in the burgh and in Glasgow, and that the public libraries in the town, which, to its honour be it said, have existed from about the beginning of its history, and have been open on easy terms to the residents, had for lack of patronage to be discontinued. Under these circumstances, it was thought to be folly to carry the measure.

Early in 1883 the Provost and the Council had plans prepared, and a scheme matured and approved by the majority, for the erection of a public hall under the powers contained in an Act of Parliament, and at a crowded public meeting, held in King Street Hall in the same year, to lay before the ratepayers the different aspects of the question,

Provost Stuart, ex-Provost Breingan, and Councillor Logan made speeches in favour of going on with that which, in their estimation, was a much needed work, on the site proposed by the Council—namely, that in Sinclair Street, adjoining the Municipal Buildings—which they recommended principally on the score of economy, as the ground belongs to the burgh. It was abundantly evident from the tone of the speeches delivered by these gentlemen that they were thoroughly aware that the feeling of the great bulk of the inhabitants was dead against their proposal. Their advocacy, therefore, of it was half-hearted in the extreme; in fact, you almost would have thought that they courted defeat.

The principal speakers against the proposed measure were a Mr Bond, who made a capital appearance, and our old friend Mr John Cramb of the Hermitage, chairman of the Parochial Board, ex-Councillor of the burgh, ex-member of the School Board, and an extraordinary great power in the Municipal State, although a small man corporeally. In his case, the soul of a Goliath is housed in such a frail tabernacle that you might expect that it would burst its bonds at any moment so as to roam o'er the trackless fields of air "uncribbed, uncabined, and unconfined." On this occasion Mr Cramb proved a host in himself. From his sick-bed he had come forth to show to his fellow-townsmen the utter folly of adopting what he termed "the crude, uncalled-for scheme of the authorities," and his eloquence, coupled with that of the other speakers on the same side, and the dread of additional taxation, caused the measure to be rejected at the poll on the following day by the ratepayers voting three to one against it. It is noteworthy that the lady voters, almost to a woman, opposed the measure. On the day when the poll was taken, Mr Cramb,

despite his infirmities, flew about lively as a winged Mercury, on picking up votes intent.

Various causes led up to the defeat of the Public Hall scheme. One party thought that there was no necessity for a public hall, the King Street Hall and the two or three minor ones in the burgh being, in their estimation, quite sufficient for the town's present requirements. Another section of the community, while disposed to favour the scheme, had what I must needs think was a groundless fear that the authorities would not implement their part of the bargain by raising the amount of cash which they had promised to get up, as they had not up to date put forth any effort so far as known in that direction. It is therefore not to be wondered at very much that the parties referred to had a dread that the ratepayers would have to pay *in toto* for the erection of the hall if they gave the authorities power to go on with it. A third section of the public, while favouring the erection of a public hall, did not approve of the proposed site, as it was, in their estimation, unsuitable on account of its being bounded in front by a comparatively narrow street, and behind by a bustling and noisy railway station—the proper and only place, in their opinion, for the erection of such a public building being the vacant feu in Colquhoun Square, corner of Princes Street.

These be the principal acts performed or attempted during the six years' reign of Mr Stuart, of whom, as Provost of the burgh and as a citizen thereof, I have now before closing this sketch to say a few words.

Provost Stuart is in politics a Liberal of an advanced type; in fact, we can hardly imagine the Provost to be anything other than advanced. He is fond of flowers.

dogs, and poultry, for all of which he has been a prize-taker. As a Christian he ranges himself under the banner of the Park Free Church, holding office in it as a deacon. He has been connected with the same for twenty-one years. Our Chief Magistrate is not a carriage man in the ordinary sense of the term ; but for all that he may be seen of an evening in company with a troop of friends, spinning along the Garelochside, each seated on that modern vehicle yecept a tricycle, so that each member of the goodly gathering may be said to not only keep his carriage but drive it. The Provost has testified his confidence in our good town's advancement by becoming a very large proprietor of heritable subjects within its bounds, so that his personal interests and those of the burgh are to a large extent identical. If he has not succeeded in doing all that he could have wished for Helensburgh by reason of several of his projects being nipped in the bud by the icy breath of an adverse public opinion, yet he must have the satisfaction of knowing that the period in which he held the reins of government has not been barren nor unfruitful in works of public utility. A noteworthy feature of Mr Stuart's Provostship has been his insisting upon members of the Council to stand when they had aught to say on public matters, and that they in their remarks must be either proposing, seconding, or supporting a motion or amendment. This course of conduct has resulted in the more rapid and satisfactory dispatch of business, and has put an effectual extinguisher on much of the profitless talk that used betimes to obtain at the Council board. In conclusion, I would hazard the remark that, while some parties in the burgh do not see eye to eye with Provost Stuart in local politics, and think his manner betimes somewhat *brusque*, and to that extent lack-

ing in an important element in the most successful leading of small or great bodies of men, yet there is no one can with any show of reason deny that the Provost has had in all his public actions a single eye to the wellbeing of the town with which he has been so long and honourably connected, and that he has in several respects been instrumental in making it better than he found it.

I have now given to the world, not without a certain amount of trepidation, the lives of the Provosts of Helensburgh. As a matter of course, before that I was in a position so to do I must either have taken their lives or received them. If I have been guilty of the former, I hope that I may escape the penalty paid sooner or later for such transgressions. If the latter represents the state of matters, then I trust that ample restitution has been made by me to society, and that the gentlemen whose lives have been placed in my keeping, and which have now been offered up as a sacrifice to a virtuous public curiosity, may, by a species of metamorphosis, enjoy a kind of modified immortality in these pages. Finally, may I be allowed to hug the dear hope that for my share in the delicate business I may escape banning and receive some little modicum of praise.

#### TOWN CLERKS OF HELENSBURGH.

Provosts have come on and Provosts have gone off the municipal stage in a more or less rapid fashion, after playing with more or less acceptance their respective parts, and I think it right that the names of the Town Clerks, and the periods when they held office during the rules of the sixteen Provosts, should be chronicled. For the chief clerks of necessity must have been to the chief dignitaries more or less a light unto their feet and a lanthorn unto their path. The list is as follows, viz.:—

John Gray, 1807 to 1811.

Duncan Turner, 1811 to 1836.

Charles Cassils, 1836 to 1844.

John Black, 1844 to 1847.

GEORGE MACLACHLAN, 1847, PRESENT CLERK.

The latter gentleman, who has for the long period of thirty-six years held office, has, on account of his professional abilities, amiability of character, and literary and antiquarian acquirements and tastes, won golden opinions from all ranks and conditions of his fellow-townsmen. Our friend is an ardent admirer of nature in her various moods and forms, and also a keen, keen fisherman, it being more congenial to his nature to hook a coy fish than a cantankerous client.



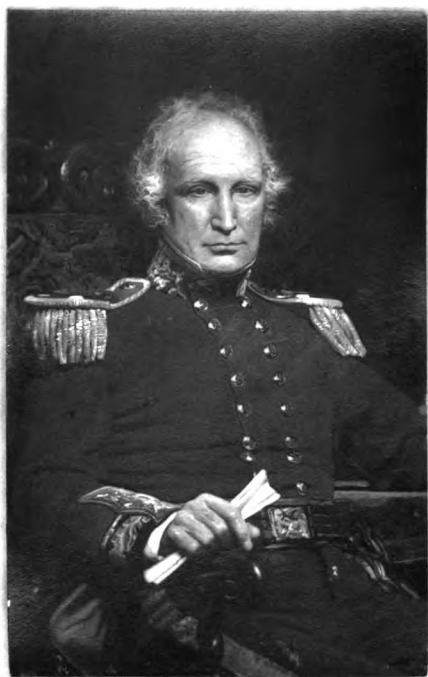


## CHAPTER XIII.

### HISTORY OF THE COLQUHOUNS OF COLQUHOUN AND LUSS, LORDS OF THE MANOR OF HELENSBURGH.

**T**HE excursions in the summer of 1882 of the Scottish Arboricultural Society have now been published in pamphlet form, and are very interesting. One of these excursions, thus recounted, was to the Luss Estates, and we cull from it the following brief and lucid history of the Colquhouns of Luss, owners of the Barony of Milligs, on which Helensburgh is built. It is from the pen of W. Kinnaird Rose, Esq., advocate, Edinburgh :—

It has been well said by Mr William Fraser, the learned and genial historian of so many of the notable figures in the history of the northern section of Great Britain, that “among the baronial families of Scotland the chiefs of the Clan Colquhoun occupy a prominent place, from their ancient lineage, their matrimonial alliances, historical associations, and the extent of their territories in the Western Highlands.” Few families, indeed, in Europe can boast of a purer or a nobler descent than the Colquhouns, and of still fewer can it be said that their lands have never been



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart Harrow.

*James Colquhoun*





alienated or impaired during the lapse of over 700 years. Certain it is that no other family in Dumbartonshire has possessed lands in the county for so long a period as the Colquhouns.

The present Baronet of Colquhoun and Luss is the representative of two very ancient families which merged into one in the reign of King David II. Sometime in the reign of Alexander II., between 1214 and 1249, Umfridus de Kilpatrick obtained from Maldouen, third Earl of Lennox, a charter of the lands of Colquhoun, in the parish of Old or West Kilpatrick. In accordance with the practice of the times, Umfridus de Kilpatrick, dropped his patronymic, and adopted instead that of the barony of which he had received the grant. Henceforth the family were known by the name of Colquhoun, and their identification with the birthplace of the great apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick, left to the researches of antiquarians.

Sir Humphrey, fourth of Colquhoun, flourished between 1308 and 1330, in the reign of King Robert the Bruce. An ardent partisan of the patriot king, Sir Humphrey remained faithful to the Bruce's cause, even in the darkest days of adversity, and in 1308, in return for his services, he received a charter of the barony of Luss from Bruce. At the battle of Bannockburn, which for ever established the independence of Scotland, the valour and skill displayed by Sir Humphrey attracted the special notice of Bruce, who rewarded him with a charter of Sauchie in Stirlingshire.

The successor of this Sir Humphrey was Sir Robert, who married the "Fair Maid of Luss," the heiress, and seventh in descent of the ancient family of Luss, of which Maldouen, Dean of Levenax or Lennox, who flourished *circa* 1150, was the founder. One of the Fair Maid's ancestors has an in-

terest for us, as throwing some light on the arboriculture of Loch Lomond-side 600 years ago.

Maurice, third Laird of Luss, on 17th August, 1277, made a charter "granting to God and the blessed St. Mungo and the Church of Glasgow the right of cutting and preparing out of any parts of his woods of Luss whatever should be necessary for the woodwork of the steeple and treasury, which the Chapter of the Cathedral of Glasgow, in consequence of its growing wealth and importance, was then in the course of erecting, with free access thereto and egress therefrom, and liberty of pasturage for the horses, oxen, and other animals which should be employed in carrying the wood required." Mr Fraser, in his history of the Colquhouns, quaintly adds, in relation to this interesting arrangement, that "in that age privileges of this description were generally granted gratuitously to the Church by the proprietors of the soil from their devotion or their fears; but on the part of this Celtic laird it was a purely mercantile transaction. In granting this privilege he does not even affect to have been governed by a higher motive than the reception of its value in money; though in conformity with the language of the time the charter is said to be granted 'to God and the blessed St. Mungo and the Church of Glasgow.'"

Upon the marriage of the Fair Maid of Luss and Sir Robert Colquhoun the extensive estates of Luss were added to the already princely territories of the Colquhouns. After the murder of James I. at Perth in 1437, a body of western islanders, taking advantage of the disorganised condition of the kingdom, invaded the western coast, led by two noted freebooters, Lachlan MacLean and Murdoch Gibson. Sir John, eighth of Colquhoun and tenth of Luss, promptly collected a body of men, and, meeting the invaders, gave

them battle. The islanders were defeated, but succeeded in accomplishing the death of Sir John Colquhoun. One tradition puts it that Sir John was barbarously murdered by the invaders on the island of Inch Murrin, in Loch Lomond, whither the gallant knight had been invited to a conference, which the invaders pretended was preliminary to a surrender. A consequence of this and other like affairs was the re-establishment in Scotland, in 1440, of Justice Aires or Circuit Courts, to be held twice a year, both on the north and south sides of the Forth.

During the next hundred years we find members of the Colquhoun family, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, and Rector of Glasgow University, while the foundation of the feuds with the Macgregors and the Macfarlanes was laid—the original quarrel arising out of “cattle liftings” by one side and reprisals by the other. The chiefs of Colquhoun and Luss withal were prominent actors in national politics, and we find the Laird of Luss dubbed a knight by Mary Queen of Scots as a reward for faithful services.

The thirteenth Master of Colquhoun, named Sir John, is mentioned in the correspondence between Queen Mary and the Earl of Bothwell, in what are known in history, as the “Casket Letters.” After the murder of Darnley, Sir John so far remained a friend of the unhappy Queen that he refused the call to arms which the Regent Murray made to the nobles at Maxwellheuch, near Kelso, but, with the caution and prescience which never forsook the family, he submitted to the authority of the Regent a few months afterwards, and fought against Mary at the battle of Langside, near Glasgow.

The successor of Sir John was Sir Humphrey, who granted a bond to the Earl of Huntly, under which he

became bound to support the Earl in all his feuds past, present, and to come. The special quarrel aimed at what was historically known as the Murray feud, in the prosecution of which the Earl of Huntly and his friends surrounded the castle of Donibristle, in Fife, one February night in 1591, set fire to the castle, forced the Earl of Murray to come forth, and then murdered him. It was this same Sir Humphrey who was attacked by a combination of the Clans Macfarlane and Macgregor. The chief of the Colquhouns was assisted by several neighbours, but the coalition of the two warlike clans from the north end of Loch Lomond was too powerful for the knight of Rossdhu, and after a sanguinary battle, the latter was forced to retreat to the stronghold of Bannachra—a castle at the foot of the Bennibuie hill.

The castle was invested by a party of Macfarlanes and Macgregors, but might have withstood their assaults had there not been a traitor within its walls. This traitor was a servant of Sir Humphrey, like him named Humphrey Colquhoun, and “while conducting his master to his room up a winding stair of the castle, made him, by pre-concert, a mark for the arrows of the clansmen who pursued him, by throwing the glare of a torch upon his person when opposite a loophole. This afforded a ready aim to the besiegers, whose best bowmen watched for the opportunity. A winged arrow darted from its string with a steady aim, pierced the unhappy knight to the heart, and he fell dead on the spot. The fatal loophole is still pointed out; but the stair, like its unfortunate lord, has crumbled into dust.” The descendants of this recreant retainer were till lately, known as the “Traitor Colquhouns;” and so late as 1861 a quarrel arose between a lineal descendant of the traitor and

a neighbour, in which the latter fractured the "traitor's" leg—so hard do traditions and the memory of wrongs die in the Highlands.

But the most tragic event in the history of the Colquhouns and the Macgregors was the battle of Glen Fruin. Tradition says that the origin of the feud between these two clans was "the summary vengeance taken by the Laird of Luss on two of the Macgregors, who having, when benighted, been denied shelter by a dependent of Colquhoun's, took a wedder from the tenant's fold, killed it, and supped on it, for which they offered payment to the owner, but whom the Laird of Luss, in the exercise of his ample powers as a feudal baron, seized, condemned, and executed." Hence the Macgregor's proverb, execrating the hour that "the black wedder with the white tail was ever lambed." The feud culminated in 1603.

Alexander Colquhoun, then Laird of Luss, was invested with the king's commission to apprehend and punish the Macgregors for their crimes. This was consequent on the raid from Glenfinlas, which had terminated in the massacre of Sir Humphrey, and the commission was drawn from King James by the appearance at Stirling of the widows of the murdered knight and his retainers displaying their husbands' bloody shirts. Sir Walter Scott confounds the incidents of the Bannachra tragedy and the subsequent proscription of the Macgregors with the later conflict of Glen Fruin.

On the 7th February, 1603, "Alistair Macgregor of Glenstra, at the head of a large body of the Clan Gregor, with the addition of a considerable number of confederates from the clans of Cameron and Anverich, armed with hag-buts, pistols, murrions, mailcoats, pow-aixes, two-handed

swords, bows, darlochs, and other weapons, advanced into the territory of Luss." "To repel the invader, the Laird of Luss hastily collected a considerable force of armed men whom, under the royal commission, he had raised for the protection of the district and the punishment of the Macgregors." Among his little army was Tobias Smollett, a burghess of Dumbarton, and ancestor of the great poet and novelist. The opposing parties met at a spot in Glen Fruin—"The Glen of Sorrow"—"between hills barren of trees and shrubs, with the exception of here and there a thorn or mountain ash."

The Macgregors, it is said, numbered 400, and the Colquhouns 300 horse and 500 foot. The Macgregors formed into two divisions—one at the head of the glen, and the other in ambuscade in a ravine called the Crate. The Colquhouns came into Glen Fruin from the Luss side, and their chief pushed on his forces, in order to get clear of the glen before encountering the Macgregors. This design was frustrated by Alistair Macgregor, who appeared at the head of the Glen with his men, while his brother John, who was in command of the ambushed Macgregors, cut off their retreat, and surrounded the Colquhouns. The ground was unsuited for the operations of horsemen, and the Colquhouns were unable to maintain their ground. Falling into a moss in their confused retreat, the Colquhouns were at the mercy of their foes, and only a scanty few were able to fight their way through the cordon of infuriated Macgregors.

One hundred and forty of the Colquhouns were slaughtered on that fatal day, and many wounded. Among those who fell on the Macgregor's side was John Dhu Macgregor, leader of the ambuscade, and brother of the chief Alistair; while the victims of their vengeance included a number of

youths from Dumbarton Grammar School, who had come out from curiosity to witness the battle, and being taken prisoners were shut up for safety in a barn. Their guardian on seeing the Macgregors successful, stabbed the youths one by one as they came out of their places of shelter. A colour of truth is given to this tradition by an act of the Privy Council, dated 1609, in which "Allan Oig M'Quenach in Glenco is accused of having, while with the Clan Gregor in Glen Fruin, with his awne hand murdered without pity the number of fourtie poor persons, who were naked and without armour."

This massacre was commemorated by the boys at Dumbarton Grammar School every year down till recently in a quaint manner. On the anniversary of the ill-fated day the *dux* of the school was arrayed in white cerements, laid on a bier, covered with the parish clergyman's gown, and then borne shoulder high by his school-fellows to a grave where the bier was deposited. The whole of the school-boys, with wooden guns reversed, marched in procession behind the bier, then formed a circle, and odes in Gaelic and English were recited. Thereafter the procession was re-formed and returned to the school chanting songs of lamentation. With poetic license Sir Walter Scott confounds the memory of Glen Fruin with that of the raid of Glen Finlas, and makes the Clan Alpine warriors sing in the "Lady of the Lake:"—

" Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,  
And Banachra's groans to our slogan replied ;  
Glen Luss and Rossdhu, they are smoking in ruin,  
And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.  
Widow and Saxon maid  
Long shall lament our raid.  
Think of Clan Alpine with fear and with woe ;  
Lennox and Leven-glen  
Shake when they hear agen,  
Rodereigh vich Alpine Dhu, ho ! hero."



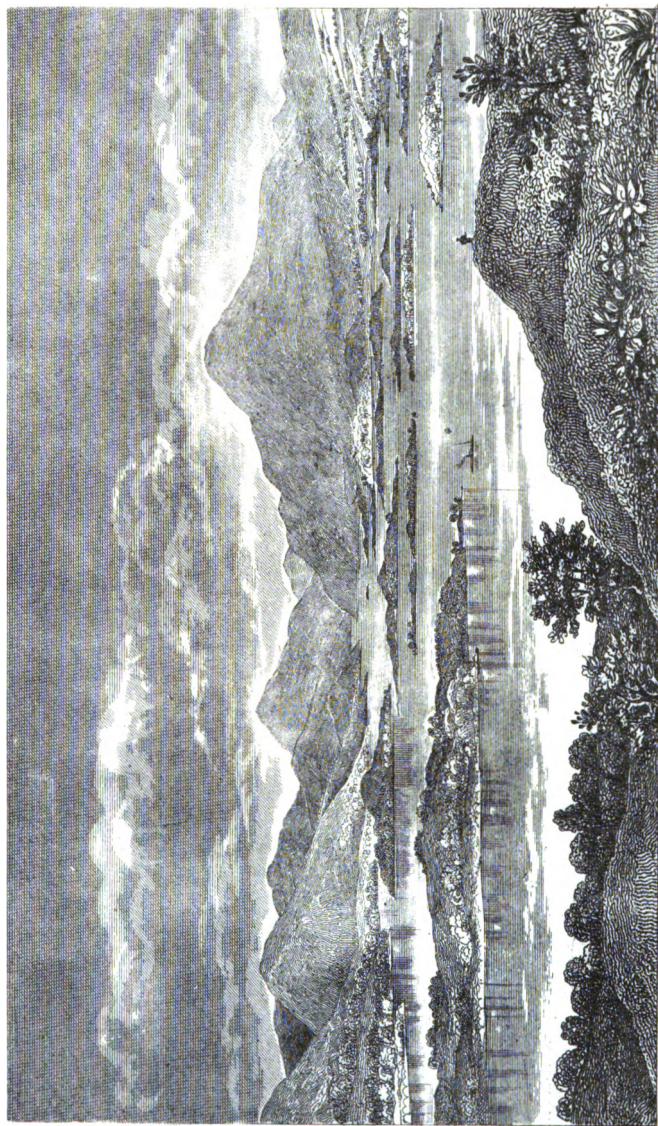
Alistair Macgregor was afterwards induced to surrender to the Earl of Argyll on promise that he would be sent to England, having previously escaped from the Sheriff of Argyll by leaping from a boat in which he was being carried across a loch, and swimming ashore to freedom. The crafty Argyll kept his promise to the ear but broke it to the hope, for he escorted Macgregor but a short way beyond the bridge of Berwick-on-Tweed, and then brought him back to Edinburgh, where he was, with several members of his clan, tried and hanged for the "crime of treason, in having attacked the Laird of Luss whilst armed with a royal commission to resist the 'cruel enterprises' of the Clan Gregor."

Coming down to the civil wars in England and Scotland, we find Sir John Colquhoun, second baronet, a staunch supporter of the Royalist party, and the Castle of Rossdhu alternately held by Cromwell's soldiers and Charles's cavaliers. Sir John was a nephew of the Marquis of Montrose, who was hanged at the Market Cross of Edinburgh on the 21st May, 1650, and his dismembered body exposed to public view afterwards in the principal towns of the kingdom. After the Restoration, the collected remains of the Marquis were interred with greater pomp than had ever been previously witnessed in Scotland at a funeral, first in Holyrood Abbey, and later in St. Giles' Cathedral, and a prominent part in these historical obsequies was taken by Sir John Colquhoun. He was a member of the Convention of Estates of Scotland.

The Colquhouns were opposed to the Nonconformists in the Covenanting times, and to the Treaty of Union with England, though to the policy of the Covenanters and to the Union it may be said that the family owe much of their present great prosperity. When the standard of rebellion







**LOCH LOMOND (FROM MOUNT MISERY)**  
(Oil Painting by Mr Hamilton MacMillan, Artist, Helensburgh, in possession of Mr Donald MacLeod.)



was raised in 1715, the Revolution settlement was warmly defended by Sir Humphrey Colquhoun, fifth baronet. At that time the Macgregors espoused the Pretender's cause, and under the command of Gregor Macgregor, a nephew of the great Rob Roy, they occupied Inch Murrin, one of the islands of Loch Lomond, and, seizing all the boats they could find, attempted to overawe the whole district.

This led to what is historically known as the Loch Lomond Expedition. The expedition consisted of the men of Paisley, Dumbarton, Cardross, Kilpatrick, Rosneath, and embraced many of the leading landed proprietors of Dumbartonshire and Argyll. This force sailed up Loch Lomond from Balloch. "Against evening they got to Luss, where they came ashore," says a local historian, "and were met and joined by Sir Humphrey Colquhoun of Luss, Baronet, and chief of that name, and James Grant of Pluscarden, his son-in-law, and brother-german to Brigadier Grant, followed by forty or fifty stately fellows, in their short hose and belted plaids, armed each of them with a well-fixed gun on his shoulder, a strong handsome target with a sharp-pointed steel of above an ell in length screwed into the navel of it on his left arm, a sturdy claymore by his side, and a pistol or two with a dirk and knife in his belt." Advancing to the stronghold of the rebels, the Royalist party "dispersed and cowed" the Macgregors, and brought all the boats under the protection of the guns of Dumbarton Castle.

Sir James Colquhoun, eighth baronet, took the Hanoverian side in the Rebellion of 1745, and after Culloden, forgetting old enmities, he exerted himself to secure indemnity for the whole of the Clan Macgregor. This Sir James commenced to build the present mansion-house of Rosssdhu in 1774, and there he and his wife, Lady Helen Sutherland

(after whom Helensburgh was named), received Dr Johnson, the great lexicographer, on returning from his celebrated Tour in the Hebrides.

Lady Helen was very neat, orderly, and particular in her household, and Dr. Johnson having got himself drenched with water in some boating expedition on Loch Lomond, came into the drawing-room with the water splashing out of his boots. Lady Helen could no longer restrain her displeasure, muttering, "What a bear!" "Yes," replied one of the company, "he is no doubt a bear, but it is *Ursa Major*."

This lady's son, Sir James, was a friend and correspondent of Horace Walpole, and being a devoted admirer of the fine arts, made a fine collection of paintings, engravings, and china.

A picturesque event happened in the life of the third Sir James. About 1810, the ancient feud which had lasted for centuries between the Colquhouns and the Macgregors was extinguished. "On an invitation from Sir James and Lady Colquhoun," says Mr Fraser, "Sir John Murray Macgregor and Lady Macgregor came on a visit to Rossdhu. The two baronets visited Glenfruin. They were accompanied by Lady Colquhoun and Misses Helen and Catherine Colquhoun. After the battlefield had been carefully inspected by the descendants of the combatants, Sir John Macgregor insisted on shaking hands with Sir James Colquhoun and the whole party on the spot where it was supposed the battle had been hottest. On the occasion of the same visit to Rossdhu, the party ascended Ben Lomond, which dominates so grandly over Loch Lomond. On the summit of this lofty mountain, Sir John Murray Macgregor danced a Highland reel with Miss Catherine Colqu-



Mechanical Photo.

Stuart, Glasgow.

*James Colquhoun*





## *Of Colquhoun and Luss.*

houn, afterwards Mrs Miller of Earnock.  
then fully eighty years of age.

The fourth Sir James, who succeeded to  
1836, was twenty-sixth of Colquhoun and  
Luss. Like his brother, the author of "The  
Loch," "Lochs and Rivers," "Salmon  
Shots," and "Sporting Days," he was a  
He did much for his extensive estate,  
every farm steading and many cottages.  
hundreds of acres, and embellished the park  
by transplanting there hundreds of large  
the trees transplanted were from fifty to  
and nearly every one succeeded. He was  
liament for Dumbartonshire for several  
Lieutenant of the county. His love of  
sense be said to have been the cause of his

About Christmas time, 1874, Sir James  
gone to the island of Inch Lonaig for a  
fine day's sport, in which several deer  
Baronet's rifle, Sir James, with four gillies  
of the chase, embarked on board a boat  
mainland. Suddenly a fierce and blinding  
down the loch, the boat was swamped, and  
were engulfed in one common watery grave.  
Sir James and two of the gillies were  
search, but the others still sleep "the sleep  
waking" in the dark unfathomed sea.  
The fifth Sir James, son of the last  
his stead, and resides on account of his  
England. He is highly esteemed for his



houn, afterwards Mrs Miller of Earnoch. Sir John was then fully eighty years of age.

The fourth Sir James, who succeeded to the estates in 1836, was twenty-sixth of Colquhoun and twenty-eighth of Luss. Like his brother, the author of "The Moor and the Loch," "Lochs and Rivers," "Salmon Casts and Stray Shots," and "Sporting Days," he was a keen sportsman. He did much for his extensive estates, rebuilding almost every farm steading and many cottages. He planted many hundreds of acres, and embellished the policies of Rosssdu by transplanting there hundreds of large trees. Many of the trees transplanted were from fifty to sixty years' growth, and nearly every one succeeded. He was member of Parliament for Dumbartonshire for several years, and Lord Lieutenant of the county. His love of sport may in one sense be said to have been the cause of his sad end.

About Christmas time, 1873, Sir James Colquhoun had gone to the island of Inch Lonaig deer-stalking, and after a fine day's sport, in which several deer fell to the gallant Baronet's rifle, Sir James, with four gillies and the trophies of the chase, embarked on board a boat to return to the mainland. Suddenly a fierce and blinding snowstorm swept down the loch, the boat was swamped, and chief and vassals were engulfed in one common watery grave. The bodies of Sir James and two of the gillies were recovered after a weary search, but the others still sleep "the sleep that knows no waking" in the dark unfathomed caves of Loch Lomond. The fifth Sir James, son of the late Baronet, now reigns in his stead, and resides on account of his health chiefly in England. He is highly esteemed for his amiable qualities.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE MORE MODERN CHURCHES OF THE BURGH.

ON reaching this, the last stage of my veracious and somewhat miscellaneous chronicle, I find that the space still at my disposal is very limited. I will therefore in my treatment of the subject to which this chapter is devoted endeavour to be brief. The first sketch which I have the honour of submitting to you is that of

#### THE PARISH CHURCH,

a neat plain building with a chaste belfry, which was built in 1847 and is seated for 800, with an admirable lecture-hall attached, capable of holding 300. In July, 1862, it was erected into a *quoad sacra* Parish Church, having the whole of Helensburgh attached. The endowing of the same was principally met by a munificent bequest of £2500 by the late James Hutcheson, Esq., long an attached member of the congregation, to which the late Sir James Colquhoun, in the most handsome manner added £300, the rest being made up by a grant from the General Assembly's Endowment Fund. The present worthy and greatly esteemed pastor of the flourishing congregation, the Rev. John

Lindsay, is its first minister, having been ordained to the charge in 1848. The first committee of the church consisted of the following gentlemen:—James Alexander, Hermitage; William Gray, Mill Brae; Andrew M'George, sen., Hillside; Rev. John Laurie Fogo, Row; Captain Hugh Brodie, 1st Royals; David Waddell, Eva Cottage. When £1200 had been collected by the above committee they, with a view to building operations being proceeded with at an early date, added to their number the following gentlemen:—R. D. Orr, banker; Dr. John Skene; John Clelland; Captain Alexander M'Leod; Captain John Wellbourn. Of the above only Messrs Waddell and Orr survive. Old Father Time has remorselessly mown down the rest; but the names of all shall for generations be held in reverence for their labour of love, and their zeal for God's glory, and for the advancement of the interests of our National Zion, and the best interests of their fellow-townsmen. In July, 1883, a very sweet full-toned harmonium was presented to the congregation by Miss Proudfoot of Lansdowne Park, which is now being used in the public service of song in the church with general acceptance. The west part of the parish was disassociated from this charge in 1883, and assigned to

#### THE WEST PARISH CHURCH.

In 1868 on account of the pressure on the space in the Rev. Mr Lindsay's Church a number of members and adherents of the Established Church formed themselves into a congregation, meeting first in a large room in Mr William Young's photographic establishment in William Street, and afterwards in an iron church of the usual regulation pattern adjacent thereto. In 1877, the iron building proving too small and otherwise unsuitable, the congregation

set themselves with a will to the task of raising money for the erection of a place of worship in a style suitable to the dignity of the body and the town, and they succeeded most admirably. In 1878, the new stately Gothic church with its elegant spire and most comfortable internal fittings was finished from the plans of Mr John MacLeod, architect, Dumbarton and Glasgow. This place of worship is also seated for 800. It stands at the intersection of King and John Streets at the south-east corner. It has in this year of grace been endowed and erected by the Court of Tiends into a Parish Church having attached to it the West end of Helensburgh. The Rev. John Baird, B.D., has discharged the duties of pastor to this congregation since its origin.

#### THE WEST FREE CHURCH.

As the successor of the Old Light Burgher Church its history has been already given at length at page 141.

#### THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

has also at my hands received already an ample notice at page 135.

#### THE PARK FREE CHURCH.

In 1862 this exceedingly handsome, spired, Gothic edifice, which reflects so much credit on the taste and munificence of the Free Church body, was erected to meet the clamant demand for additional accommodation in connection therewith. It is seated for about 800, and was built from the plans of Mr John Honeyman, of Glasgow. The Rev. W. H. Carslaw, M.A., is minister of this charge and has been so from its birth.

#### THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION,

formerly Relief, in 1842 met in the Town Hall, and in

1845 erected a place of worship in King Street which was seated for 450. The Rev. Dr M'Ewan was in that year ordained minister of the charge and remained over it until 1856, when the Rev. David Duff, D.D., LL.D., was chosen as his successor. In 1877 he was called to fill the chair of Church History in the United Presbyterian Hall. After a brief vacancy, the Rev. Alex. Hislop, M.A., the present minister was elected to fill the post. In 1861 this congregation finished and entered upon the occupancy of a new and attractive church in Sinclair Street, contiguous to the site of their old one, which is now used as a public hall. Mr Spence, of Glasgow, was the architect of the new building.

SS. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

A congregation in connection with the Episcopal body was formed in the town so far back as 1814. In 1842 a church was erected and dedicated to The Holy Trinity. It was a very unpretentious edifice. In 1851, in connection therewith, there was built a schoolhouse, and in 1857 a parsonage. These operations were carried through to a large extent by the exertions of the Rev. John Bell, the then incumbent of the church. In 1862 the Rev. J. Stuart Syme was appointed to the charge, and in 1866 the old edifice, which was too small for the flourishing congregation, was razed to the ground and the present imposing one, in the 12th century French Gothic style of architecture, dedicated to SS. Michael and All Angels', was erected on its site. Internally, the building is very solemnizing. The consecration of the edifice took place on May 7th, 1868. Mr Anderson, of Edinburgh, was the architect. In August, 1883, a noble organ, costing fully £1000, was added to the equipments of the chapel.



## BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE.

For a lengthened number of years this place of worship was at Eastburn Chapel, King Street, a humble, two-storey dwelling-house-looking edifice, which had as its minister the late Mr Robert Dickie, after whose death it remained without an incumbent for a considerable period of time. The Rev. Norman MacLeod then accepted the vacant post ; but he, after a brief pastorate left, and left his flock once more without a shepherd. But in this year of grace 1883 a call from the congregation has been presented to the Rev. G. Wilson, M.A., and been accepted by him, so that this little charge is once more in proper working order. The adherents of this sect now meet in the Good Templars' Hall, Princes Street.

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL.

The first building used for worship by our Roman Catholic brethren in town was a very humble one in Upper Maitland Street, off King Street. Now they have erected and fully equipped, in Grant Street, an attractive semi-Gothic chapel and school-house of red sandstone, faced with white, having towering over their summit a neat little belfry. A considerable number of priests have in succession officiated in this charge, some of whom were gentlemen of considerable learning and high culture. The attendance at the chapel, which accommodates about 300, is large when trade is good.

## A FEW CONCLUDING WORDS.

And now, as my random recollections run near their goal, I would, before I make my *conge* and take formal leave of my readers, draw a rough contrast between the Helensburgh of the past and the Helensburgh of the present. In my early days the town depended upon a few spring wells

(some of which were not above suspicion in regard to their purity) for its supply of that indispensable fluid. Now the burgh is amply furnished by gravitation with water of almost unapproachable quality. The works embrace storage for 24,000,000 gallons, and the quantity sent out on an average into the town per diem 31,450 gallons, being at the rate of four gallons per head of the population. My estimate of the population of the town at the beginning of the century, as noted in a foregoing portion of this sketch, was 800; now, in this year of grace, 1883, it may be fairly set down as 7500—truly a marvellous increase to take place in the lifetime of one man.

Although an eminently healthy place, yet the early non-resident doctor arrangement came to an end long ago, and we have now the mystic number of seven to minister unto us when our machinery gets out of order; and also a handsome hospital and infirmary, for the treatment of patients labouring under infectious and non-infectious diseases. Before this arrangement was gone into, patients who required hospital treatment had to be taken either to Greenock or Glasgow. I would compute the mileage of streets, when I was a boy, at eight or nine, now it is 30. The number of letters dealt with eighty years ago in the then primitive Post Office was exceedingly small, now in a week the average of ordinary letters posted is 18,919; registered letters for a year 2329; money and postal orders 10,035; and 1375 savings bank transactions for the same period; while there were during 1882, 27,088 telegrams sent out, and £3556 5s 6d drawn for stamps. Down to the end of the first quarter of the century the oil and the candle of tallow had to do duty as artificial illuminants in our places of business and in our dwellings. Now the town and district is favoured with

coal gas of most excellent quality, distributed by means of a most extensive mileage of pipes extending as far up the Gareloch as Shandon. For many years one policeman was charged with the duty of being a terror to evil-doers, and he had for his head-quarters the dingy little erstwhile theatre which was also the seat of the executive government. The constabulary staff now numbers one superintendent, (Mr M'Hardy), one serjeant and eight constables, under the able supervision of chief-constable Mr Joseph Jenkins of the county force, and these, and the municipal dignitaries and officials, have their quarters in the new, most suitable, and elegant burgh buildings.

In my youth there was a good deal of waste ground about the burgh whereon, *ex gratia*, the early natives played at games. Now, without asking by your leave, they have for their delectation three beautiful small parks—that of Cairndhu, the East-end one, and Walker's Rest, near the summit of the Black Hill, the former and the latter of which for beauty of situation stand almost peerless. And, in addition, are there not curling and skating ponds of considerable size, and bowling greens which for situation excel, as far as I have seen, those of any other town in the kingdom? Amongst these places of recreation must also be numbered the Ardencaple cricket field. Having drawn the foregoing contrast, I will conclude, as being a seventh son I am entitled to do, by prophesying a splendid future for Helensburgh. As the years roll on, it will be more and more entitled to claim the proud distinction of being the Brighton of Scotland. To one and all of those who have lent a willing, appreciative ear to my tale, I now say Farewell—an old man's blessing attend you !







